

# BIG JOHN BALDWIN



WILSON VANCE





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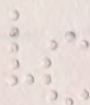


# BIG JOHN BALDWIN

*Extracts from the Journal of an officer  
of Cromwell's Army recording some of  
his experiences at the Court of Charles I  
and subsequently at that of the Lord Pro-  
tector and on the Fields of Love and War  
and finally in the Colony of Virginia edited  
with sparing hand*

By

WILSON VANCE



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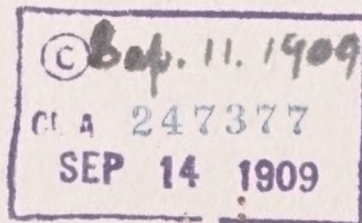


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To  
WILSON BEALL VANCE







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BIG JOHN BALDWIN







## CHAPTER I

### HE OPENETH AND DEDICATETH HIS JOURNAL

BALDWINSMERE, 10th June, 1638.

YESTERDAY, being my sixteenth birthday, the Rev. Elijah Balsley preached two tremendous long discourses, coming then to Baldwinsmere to pass the night. I forget just what texts were dwelt upon by Mr. Balsley, but his discourses were pronounced with great fervor, earnestness and conviction, and produced a deep impression upon his faithful hearers. There can be no doubt of the godly zeal of many of the people of the Fen country, much of the which is doubtless due to the flaming sound of the gospel trumpet as blowed by Mr. Balsley. The Almighty hath vouchsafed him great lung power, and when he really sets himself to the work he vouchsafes a most prodigious blast. We of the Saving Remnant ought surely to be thankful that this chosen instrument hath been sent unto us. The papists have ne'er a leg to stand upon after he hath had a few hours' work on them.

Mr. Oliver Cromwell rid over with him and supped with us, following which the evening was spent in much godly discussion of the signs of the times. Cromwell is, to my mind, a chosen vessel, and if things do grow worse, he must come to the front, to my poor thinking. He thinks well of the pup Dancer by Belial out of my setter bitch Rosalind, and offered me a pound for the same, the which I declined, for, look you, his father and mother being the best bird dogs in all the Fen country he is worth more money; besides I am training him for Mistress Eleanor Hedges, daughter of Sir Charles Hedges, our good neighbor, and Nell doth already love him greatly (better, I fear me, than she doth his master, *J. B.*). So I promised him the best of the next litter for no price at all save his



kindly good will, which he pledged me I should always have.

After Mr. Cromwell had taken his leave the whole household was summoned to the great hall where Mr. Balsley took for the evening lesson a portion of scripture telling of the punishment of the Jews for having gone a-whoring after strange gods, the which (I cannot recall the particular book of the Bible from which he took it, but his voice did fill all the hall and pouring out of the open door so disturbed the dogs that they slunk off otherwheres to sleep) he expounded as he went along with pious unction, being engaged thereat for more than an hour. Then after wrestling with the Powers of Darkness most faithfully in prayer for another half-hour, he gave us his blessing; and truly our knees cracked loudly as we rose to our feet and sought our beds.

Mr. Balsley is surely a most learned man, and it must be a sign of grace that he hath all he knows so readily and steadily on tap; for it floweth most freely at all times, and while I do not fully understand all that he says at all times, yet so strong is the power he hath that after listening to him for a while the very tone of his voice fills me with a desire to avenge the evils of which he doth discourse, whatever they may be; and this feeling continueth till such time as the sinful flesh, (and I ride at thirteen stone,) grows weary and I fain would rest; against the which inclination I must wrestle, it being clearly an evidence that Apollyon doth desire to have me that he may sift me as wheat; for so I am certified by Mr. Balsley, to whom I mentioned, seeking counsel, my infirmity.

So much for the Sabbath day; and I was mighty glad to get to bed where I went to sleep before I had finished my prayers; (for which I trust God will forgive me and it seems to me not unreasonable to hope for that same inasmuch as I had spent eight hours and a half under Mr. Balsley's instructions between the hours of nine in the morning and twelve of the night,) I having sought to say them in bed as being more comfortable—the which, I fear me, is a snare of the Evil One.



The morning broke rainy and misty and everything was dripping. After family worship, which included another hour's expounding of a passage from Holy Writ by the Rev. Mr. Balsley, and another prayer of half an hour concerning the evils that threaten Israel, (which surely may be avoided if God shall but act upon the suggestions made in Mr. Balsley's petition which abounded in plenteous information and instruction,) we got breakfast; and truly I could have eaten a horse.

Then, father being set to an errand in another direction and requiring the attendance of my elder brother Will, I was sent to put Mr. Balsley forward on his journey a matter of some ten miles; and the roads were heavy. The tediousness of the way was enlivened by much good advice from my reverend companion as to how I should order my walk and conversation so that I may win the great reward reserved for the righteous if indeed I am of the Elect, of the which I am not clearly certified in my own mind, but I am inclined to take no chances since I have no desire to go to Hell where the fire dieth not nor is the worm forever quenched. (This doth not sound exactly right as I read it over, and yet I will take my oath—in a godly way—that it is like unto the language used by Mr. Balsley more than once in my hearing during the past two days.)

Leaving Mr. Balsley doing prodigious execution upon a mighty dinner set for him at the house of Eliakim Ellipod, who is, in himself, as he told me, a precious testimony and surely a man would not lie about such a thing as that, I came back home, taking my way by Sir Charles's where I saw nothing of Mistress Eleanor save her face, which she twisted into outlandish shapes at an upper window pretending not to see me.

(Note:—To strive with Nell anent certain undignified, hoydenish tendencies, with which, sent by Beelzebub I am convinced, she is often led to appear to flout and disparage *J. B.* who stands six feet four and can beat any man or boy of his size that he hath ever yet encountered at sword



play, single stick, wrestling, lifting great weights, running or fisticuffs, bar none.)

And so home, where the best mother in all the world had caused to be provided a most toothsome meal—there being not quite enough, however, as there was only one roast capon, a half of a cold venison pasty, two small loaves of bread and three pints of beer. However I said nothing but looked forward to supper, three hours later, for I knew she would worry and grieve if she thought I had suffered because of a lack of a sufficient quantity of nourishment. Then, it being too wet to train the pup, I began this journal, it being upon the suggestion of Mr. Balsley that it would be for my godly welfare that I should provide this means of setting down my spiritual experiences, that I may have a record upon which to ponder from time to time; for herein, he pointed out, I may note and be able to compare my growth in grace, as becometh one who would not live to this world but for those things which make for righteousness, the which suggestion doth most strongly commend itself to me.

And now, at eleven of the night, I here dedicate this book of blue paper bound in calf-skin to this sole use and purpose, being minded to exclude therefrom all things worldly or vain and trifling, to the end that it may profit my spiritual good and so help me on in the right path. And mayhap, who knoweth? some day it may be as the sound of the trumpet to awaken from slothful slumbers a descendant who might, perchance, without this contemplation of the spiritual conflicts and victories of his grandsire, be utterly lost through sinful and undisturbed lethargy and thus cast into outer darkness where is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

And so to bed I go, mighty tired, for never before have I writ so much at one time.

(Note:—To try to remember *not* to attempt to say my prayers in bed again after last night's experience.

Note:—To shorten my prayers by leaving out righteous denunciation of the enemies of the true religion in the



which matter Mr. Balsley is so much better qualified to advise the Almighty.

Note:—To see Thomas Templeton early to-morrow to trade my brindled bull for his gray and yellow mastiff; but if he asks boot the dicker is off—he is ever seeking his own advantage.)

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER II

### HE CHASTENETH HIS BROTHER FOR HIS SOUL'S HEALTH

AT THE MERE, June 11th.

THE sun was shining bright when Will snatched the cover off me and pulled my great toe nearly out by the roots this morning, for the which I will duck him in the Mere some day—for he is but a foolish boy thus to get in debt to me, he being, it is true, four years my elder, but weighing only nine stone four pound to my thirteen odd, and standing six inches shorter, and must be taught to play his pranks upon those nearer to his own size and weight. Still, I was nothing loth to rise, feeling that elation of spirit which comes from pure, fresh air, newly washed and so transparent that the sun shining through it felt like a bath of strange and strengthening powers.

I had been over to Templeton's and returned, having traded my bull for his mastiff, receiving two shilling and a pair of new ash oars for my boat to boot,—(but not without a struggle, for Tom is sadly self-seeking and grasping and always having an eye to the main chance, as I pointed out to him, showing how such a tendency must inevitably, if not corrected, lead to a most sinful love of and setting store by the things of this world, which are after all but naught and do but perish in the using, whereas he should strive more for those things which do build up his hope of life in the hereafter), before I remembered (just after having enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing my new mastiff wallop Will's prize bull most beautifully and masterfully), that I had clean forgotten to say my prayers this morning.

The smiting of my conscience was so sore that I went at once to my room and there on my knees besought pardon



and bewailed my sinful nature, when, all without fair and decent warning, Will bounced in and jumped on my shoulders and began pummeling me (just as I had begun to point out how the Lord might and ought to avenge Himself of His enemies, the which I bethought myself to do as a sort of penance for my shameful neglect of my first morning duty); and all because Bulger had licked his bull. So that it became necessary to drop my prayers before I had reached the "Amen" and take Master William in hand.

This I proceeded to do with more joyful alacrity, I grieve to confess, than I had gone to my devotions, and in a jiffy I had my gentleman even where I wanted him, nor did I let him go till he had cried "peccavi" in the choicest Latin he had learned at Oxford, where he got all these airs and assumptions the which I am so often called upon by a plain and pressing sense of duty to correct in him for the same his soul's health. For what merit is it in us if we are ever striving to perfect our own spiritual natures only, while we selfishly remain blind and unfeeling to the best welfare of those by whom we are surrounded? Will is a good fellow and hath promise, and I may not shut my eyes to the good that may come of him if he shall but keep in the right path and frame of mind. Daily am I constrained to feel that I must admonish and chasten his rebellious spirit that he may not be eternally lost.

And I would not that any should think that I take too much credit to myself and am puffed up with false pride and vain-glory when I say that, so deeply do I desire his great and lasting good, that I go to his rescue, admonishing and chastening him, with even more pleasure than I take in exercising those salutary disciplinings upon myself whereby I confound the designs of the Devil upon myself. Will does not seem to see in this that degree of unselfishness which I, in all humility, cannot fail to recognize, his eyes being blinded, as I have patiently showed unto him, and his nature being unregenerate and alas! ever prone to evil. Nevertheless I do have great hope for him, being



minded that if he be not brought into that state of grace for which he should ever strive and faint not, it shall not be because I have neglected my own clear and positive duty.

Truly we are not to live for ourselves in this world, but should ever seek to bless and brighten the prospects of eternal bliss of others; and if this be the part of one who plainly sees what he should do, where could he better begin than at home, and with his own brother? So I am fixed in my purpose to be, in every sense of the word, a brother to William Baldwin, Esquire, at all costs to myself and without selfish calculation as to my own interests. And this he shall be brought to feel and know and be thankful for; especially if he fetches hither the big brindle mongrel from the Hay Cock Inn to whip my new mastiff, as he wickedly and contumaciously vowed to-day he would do.

J. B.



### CHAPTER III

#### AS TO A LITTLE MAID, AND A STRANGE THRILL HER HANDS IMPART

15th August.

It hath been some time since I gave proper attention to this record of my spiritual vicissitudes, victories and shortcomings, but I have been so busy with other things that I have forgotten for the most part (in very truth I must confess it with shame and contrition!) my duty in this respect. The summer hath been so joyful and pleasant a one—for never before, it hath seemed to me, have the soft airs been so sweet, the verdure of the fields and gardens so bright and beautiful, the song of birds so alluring and pleasing, the Mere so enticing with its clear coolness, and its rich depths so abounding with fish waiting to be caught; never before hath the joy of swiftly careering over the earth on the back of a good horse been so delightful; never have the scents and songs from the hayfields had so much of pleasure in them for me as during the golden days of this summer.

Will saith that I am but a stupid dolt upon whom father hath wasted money in seeking to educate me, and once he said something to me about the foolishness of trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear; but this he said but once, nor will he, I warrant, be in haste to repeat any such ribaldry in my presence again as applied to me, seeing that I made known to him very successfully my disapproval of such observes. And father, who stands but five foot six, and weighs even lighter than Will, hath disparaged me because of my size and weight and hath reminded me more than once that many of the great men of history were of but small stature, hinting that to him that hath great bulk of bone and sinew but little else is given, that he



gains physical bigness at the sacrifice of mental ability; and even my good mother treats me with a compassionate kindness, very trying to me, as if she felt sorry for one who had not been given brains to shine in the world; while Nell Hedges doth so gall and chafe me with her derision, scoffing at me because of my hugeness, with a spirit of such keen and mischievous enjoyment of the misery she cannot but see she causeth me, that I wonder I do not hate her instead of seeking out the little witch at every chance, and feeling that I buy the pleasure of being with her very cheap at such a cost. But I am not cast down.

I am as God made me, with such damages as Beelzebub hath managed to inflict on me, and if I cannot construe so well as Master Will, nor step so deftly in the dance, nor pipe so tunefully in a song, still I can do well enough to suit me; my scholarship may never set the Mere on fire; a man may not swing a fifteen inch foot as if it were a fairy's; and if I have not Will's sweet treble I'll wager that when I do sing I may be heard of persons in the vicinage, aye, even to some distance. As for the rest I'll have no japes from anybody in my own equality and those who think to go too freely with me had better keep beyond the reach of my arms.

Of a truth, Nell Hedges is the most engaging young girl I ever met, and hath for me a great attraction at which I marvel, seeing that she is but a mere child, being only fourteen, and I have never before had much pleasure in the company of the fussy, namby-pamby, foolish things, who run from a bull or a mouse, and scream if the boat tips ever so little on the Mere.

Not that my sister Betty is of that kind; for in good honesty, she is mighty near a match for me, being about an inch shorter and builded more heavily and with a courage that nothing save mother's tongue and father's frown will daunt. But then Betty is my sister, and that's different, and I want no better help at breaking a colt or rowing a boat. And as for her spirit, brother Will can testify



to that since the day when he thought to make a wondrous witty jest and said he was in touch with a London man who desired to take her and me to the city to show us as giants from the land of Gath; for the which Mistress Elizabeth did carry him bodily to the horse-trough and souse him well therein to the complete spoiling of his brave new doublet and second best laced coat—and at the which father laughed most heartily, telling him he would best hereafter keep a civil tongue in his head; nor did mother give him any comfort.

But Nell Hedges is a rare girl. Her eyes are as blue as the skies and her hair is like the sunshine drifting down of a summer day through the leaves of the trees what time the air is filled with droning bees, and swift-darting swallows skim about the eaves. I take some pains to try to fix the color, for, being hasty, I once told her, and only a week ago it was, that I liked to see her hair waving and curling about her face and eyes as if it knew how lucky it was; and when she asked me what shade it had, looking at the time so frankly into my eyes that I was sorely discomposed and all my wits being in a twitter for some reason which it angers me to feel that I cannot explain, I said that it reminded me of the ripest yellow pumpkin I ever saw. At the which my lady gave a toss of her head and a vicious cut to her mare's flanks which sent her flying down the road at such speed that it was not till we had raced for more than two mile that I caught up with her, she being mounted on Sylvia, Sir Charles's sorrel, which is rightly counted the fleetest piece of horse-flesh in all the Fen country. I would willingly trade my high-stepping Roger who is of approved blood and breeding and hath shown himself a doughty roadster with courage, bone and endurance more than once, standing sixteen hand two inches, for the mare Sylvia, and throw in my mastiff which I had from Tom Templeton, my setter bitch Rosalind and even a pound or two which I have laid by, to boot; if it were not that I would not take her away from Nell.



Well, when at last I caught up with the wayward creature she was as demure as a little kitten and asked me if I was not fond of golden things; and kept pointing out the bright hue of buttercups, the rich tone of the ripe corn tossing and heaving like a yellow sea as the summer wind touched it; and when the sunset came she would see nothing of the reds, but always dwelt upon the gold that piled in fleecy clouds all about the Western sky. And I do think (the thought coming to me as I write) that Mistress Nell hath a very pretty conceit of the color of the hair she allows to fly about her pink ears and pretty face in a fashion which is so untidy and yet so vastly becoming.

As for the rest, she hath a small, oval face and teeth like transparent alabaster, and her skin is as white as milk save on her cheeks where it is just a shade less pink than her ears. She stands about fifteen hand—I mean about five feet high, and weighs, I do believe, not more than seven stone; for when I picked her up by the waist one day and seated her upon a bough of the apple-tree by the bee-hives in the orchard, I was filled with a great fright for fear I might toss her clear over the tree-top. She hath feet like a doll's, on which she dances about like an autumn leaf in the cool winds made crisp by the frosts. Indeed, I sometimes think that I know not if they be feet—they surely are not if mine are. And her hands are as cool and fresh and soft as lettuce leaves, tiny little things which I can hold both in my one and know not that they are there save for the most curious thrill they do shoot through my frame of such power that my heart thumps and my breath comes short and gaspingly; the which I am at a loss to account for.

It hath sometimes been my thought that some persons must be filled with some sort of a subtle essence which thus communicates itself to others and would be, as it might be, uncanny, if it had not somehow a mighty pleasant, and yet to say truth, a touch of uncomfortable feeling.

Now, from the fact that I have never observed such a sensation accompanying the clasping of hands with any



man—I held Will's one day for full five minutes and experienced nothing like it; which may, however, be explained by the fact that he was kicking my shins the while I was making the trial (of the purpose of which I had not advised him) and producing a quite different effect—I have concluded that it must be a quality belonging alone to the female sex; though I have never derived any tingling feeling from Betty's hands except when she hath boxed my ears, and that feeling is as little like that imparted by Nell's hands as can be imagined.

I shall now say my prayers and go to bed, asking in my petitions that I may be made to understand some things that are a great puzzle to me. I have writ enough this day to make up for my past remissness, I am thinking, having been kept in my room ever since three o'clock by order of my father for having thrashed Tom Templeton at fisticuffs; he having said that I could not run well because my legs—shanks, he called them—are too long, as he doth falsely assert, between the knee and the ankle joint. He is nearly my size, being about two inches shorter and weighing two stone less, and ought to have done better. Will helped him mount his horse and rode off with him. There was a rich purple color around his eyes which was not there when he came over this morning to fish in the Mere, and his nose was the biggest part of his head.

Tom is not a bad fellow in his way, but he sometimes mistaketh his limitations most vilely.

Note:—To wager my horse Roger against Tom's black Prince David, that I can outrun his said David, which he thinks a great race-horse, one mile and repeat—he to ride Prince David and I to run stripped to shirt and small clothes. If he plays me any trick I shall give him another beating; which will do him no harm; for except my brother Will I know of no one who standeth more continually in need of wise correction than Tom Templeton.

Note:—To strive more faithfully than ever to be a dutiful brother to my sister Betty, who smuggled me up a cold game-pie, father having ordered that I should go supper-



less to bed. She says sometimes she wishes she was a man; and I do not blame her; for if ever a girl deserved to be a man it is my sister Betty.)

And so to prayers and bed. May God forgive my sins and make me a better boy.

Sometimes I feel that growth in grace that I am almost persuaded I ought to preach His word to the upbuilding of His Israel of which I am one of the Remnant, a brand snatched from the burning. One having peculiar endowment of true grace would do well to use it unselfishly for others.

(Note:—To ask counsel on this point of the Rev. Mr. Balsley the next time he comes. If he be in doubt as to my spiritual fitness to show him this my journal.)



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCERNING A GAY YOUNG SPARK FROM LONDON

THE MERE, 12th October.

A GAY young spark hath come down from London, and is a guest at Sir Charles's. It is borne in upon me that I shall be moved shortly to smite him hip and thigh, for, of a surety, he is a son of Belial. If he be not, then should he take in the blazoned cognizance (whence came so vile a word, and what doth it mean I wonder?—but it fits him), that doth proclaim him one. His name is Lord Lovering, and I do believe he hath more clothes than would outfit a decent draper's shop. Never have I met him twice in the same garb, and he hath a smooth-faced lackey with him who is a fit servant for such a fool.

His airs and graces are beyond belief. He hath ostrich feathers of price, precious stones to his sword-hilt and rings on his fingers and gold lace on his coat and doublet and other glittering gauds. His buckles alone would buy a pretty piece of land down here in the Fens, and he is forever dangling about Mistress Eleanor Hedges, and is not fit to breathe the same air with her. Of age about twenty year, he treats me as if I were a mere school-boy; and one day riding out with Mistress Eleanor and meeting me as I was walking with Master Turbot, my tutor, he asked me if I had got my lessons well and were let out to play. Methinks there is a lesson which he must speedily learn. And I shall, please God, be his tutor to teach it him.

He is not of the Saving Remnant and it is a scandal that he should be allowed to remain in the Fens, the fortress and strong defense and abiding place of God's faithful and chosen people. If I am to be raised up to rid the country of him—of the which I have felt more than once



strong inward conviction—I will give surety that the work shall be so well and faithfully done that he will conclude that the air of the Fens is insalubrious for him and will ever remain so.

Since he hath been here, a matter of more than a fortnight now, I have had barely a word with Nell; it begins to seem as if she were to be kept by him ever engaged, and we were to be separated and see nothing of each other, while he is here—and the nutting season come. When I go to the Hall I am met by young Charley, Nell's brother, a good fellow and who gives himself vast pains to make the time pass gaily for me. But I get only a glimpse of Nell, and then she is always with the mincing jackadandy, sometimes singing with him—he hath a worse treble than my brother Will—or she sews at her sampler while he reads some foolish tale or other to her; or they go riding, and I must admit he hath a good seat and a mettlesome horse with a skill to show him off.

He is said to be good, too, at sword-play, having learned in France, he told me, where he traveled a year ago. I know not what new tricks of fence have been devised in France since Phillipe, my old teacher, came thence, but if they have no new ones then am I not afraid of him. Phillipe saith I have little more to learn save to be not so heavy of hand, and he hath taught me all the cunning he knows. Twice in the past week have I disarmed him, and he that does that to our Phillipe need fear but few.

I know not why Sir Charles hath invited him. Some tale was told me of a long friendship between his father and Sir Charles, but it is known that Lord Lovering hath been a favorite at court, and what he hath in common with God's people I cannot see. Sir Charles himself is not too secure in their confidence, and would do well to look to his own footing. The day seems at hand when he must abandon his neutral stand and take his place either with the Lord's people or with the emissaries of Satan who seek to destroy and trample upon the true religion.



Never have I felt so strongly the need of a separation of the true and faithful from those whose minds are turned to vanity and who run after strange gods and worship at the shrine of the Scarlet Woman, as I have felt it during the past two weeks. There is nothing in Lord Lovering, so far as I can see, that is to be thought a means of grace, and yet at every sight of him (with Nell, for it seems they are always together), I feel more and more heavily and soberly the sense of my duty to arise to the defense of the true faith. Is this a call from on high to go forth a militant combatant in the cause? Awhile ago I felt almost persuaded that I was called to pray and preach; now I feel yet more impressed that I am summoned to fight; and doth it not prove the last call to be the true one that I have a much more cheerful willingness to answer it than the first?

(Note:—To ask in my petitions for heavenly leading in this matter. If I am called to fight and to drive this young coxcomb out of the land, I only ask to be led—the leading done, I will attend to the balance of the matter with all good-will.)



## CHAPTER V

### HE HATH DEALINGS WITH A POACHER AND ENSUING TROUBLE

20th October.

CAUGHT a poacher this morning snaring birds and hares on the south side of the Park, where the wood is the most dense and where the adjacent field, which bore this year a bountiful crop of corn, gives good feeding ground for the birds. Gave the fellow a few turns with my hand in his collar; it was scarcely day and the frost lay light upon the ground; in some way when I let him go he slipped, and, his head striking the hard root of a tree, fell senseless. I gathered him up and carried him home, where my mother and Betty soon brought him around. He had three hares and a dozen fat birds which I sent to the kitchen. When he had sufficiently recovered he told me he had poached to feed his family, recently come hither from Bristol way, and now housed in a hovel back of the Hay Cock Inn barns.

To prove his story I went with him, first going to my room to get my purse. Arriving there I found it was as he had said. His wife seemed a decent woman, but worn and thin and hungry-looking, and the half dozen poor brats, the oldest not more than eight years, were almost wolfish in their clamors for food, to say nothing of their state of half nakedness. I had £1 3s. 8d. in my purse (which was sadly depleted by my brother Will yesterday, who wagered me £2 that his new bull, Rover, could whip my mastiff, which he did, and Will pouched my silver—but I have heard of another dog down the Ouse a few miles, which I have been told truly will eat Rover up, and him I will have, in a day or two, and get back my money).



So I emptied my purse into the woman's lap and going home told my mother, and she and Betty made up a hamper of food which I took them. When I got back my father had just come down to his breakfast. Hearing of the poaching, and he being a magistrate, he was for having the poor fellow incontinently to the gaol for his lawful punishment, but I would not tell him where he could be found, answering, when he pressed me, that he was gone toward Bristol and doubtless by now well out of reach. This did not please him and he sent me up here to spend the day in meditation upon my sins. If I have done wrong in this I'm sorry but also mighty glad that Master Poacher, to whom I got Betty to send word to make haste to decamp, got off free.

Lord Lovering is still at the Hall and my zeal to assist the Lord Jehovah to put His enemies under His feet grows daily and strengthens.

I have seen Nell only once this week and then she was with him.

J. B.



## CHAPTER VI

### HE ENCOUNTERETH TWO HIGHWAYMEN

30th October.

It took me a long time to bring Master Thomas Templeton up to the point of accepting my challenge for a race between my long shanks and his black horse Prince David by Squire Brownlee's black horse Boaz, out of the brown mare Miriam, but I did it at last, and am now under sentence of three days' confinement in my room on bread and water (but Betty, bless her! will never see me starve, and smuggles me in food sufficient to keep body and soul together, scolding like a virago the while—and I do believe mother is privy to her soft-hearted treachery), and if there is any justice left in this troubled realm, the which I have frequent abundant cause to doubt, the horse is mine; although I have offered to grant Tom equity of redemption in him, he to pay me £7 in gold and to give me the new sword which Sir Geoffrey brought him down from London his last birthday. For I am not of a grasping or avaricious nature and did but run the race for Tom's good, he being froward and perverse and given to sinful pride in his own opinions and a vile conceit of himself. Still, having made the race and having fairly won the horse at some certain cost and expense to myself aside from the necessary physical exertion, which of itself was no small matter, for Prince David is a gallant beast and a fleet, and he did push me hard, I feel that I ought to have him or something in lieu of him.

But here my father hath interfered interposing an interdiction, saying that the race in itself was sinful, and that I shall not take the shameful proceeds of my ungodly wan-



toness and even going so far as to insist that I must give o'er cock-fighting and the matching of my dogs in fair honest combat against those who have a foolish conceit of the superiority of their own birds and animals—sure he would make life a dull, tedious thing by thus depriving it of all approved and manly sport, such as delights the heart of man and is clean and innocent in itself.

I have the greatest reverence and respect for my father, who is, of all the fathers I ever knew or read of, the bravest, kindest, justest and wisest, and I will never wilfully do anything to wrong or grieve him. And yet I cannot but think, looking at the matter impartially and without any bias whatever, as I always consider all questions, that he doth frequently overstep his limits and oppose his judgment and opinions to mine in a manner most unaccountable in one so well endowed that he ought to know better than to do so. I must not judge of my father, leaving that to the siftings and tryings of the Great Judge of all, but when I see so often, when he opposeth his notions to my judgment, that he is clearly and unreasonably in the wrong, I am filled with a filial anxiety as to the penalty that must at last be exacted from him; which gives me great pain and uneasiness on his account.

(Note:—Not to forget in my prayers this matter of so much import to one whom I honor and love; but I shall do this secretly, as we are taught in the Scriptures, saying nothing to him about it, but looking with confidence for the reward which shall be given me, or rather to him, openly.)

Tom was, at first, mighty unreasonable about the threshing I had given him, going so far in his foolish perversity as to behave as if he thought I had done him a wrong. I reasoned with him most patiently and pointed out to him that what I did was for his soul's health; to which he replied that his soul was in no need of what he chose to term my officious intermeddling, saying that he would take care of it himself and would thank me to concern myself with my own affairs, to the utter and entire exclu-



sion of his concerns; upon which I could only make reply that his own words furnished the very best and most unanswerable reason why I should put myself out in his behalf, since, if he were not in a state most parlous he could plainly see for himself that he was in need of the aid and assistance I had so freely rendered him; that he must not think I could be so selfish as to immerse myself so wholly in those things which were of interest to me alone as to fail to act for those by whom I am surrounded, and to set them right when I saw them in the bonds of error; that his remarks derogatory to my legs between the knees and the ankles (for he thus confined himself and made no reference to any other portion of my anatomical structure), could not have proceeded from one who was in that complete possession of his own faculties which would enable him to do his whole duty towards God and his fellow-men; that I would have been like the Priest and the Levite in the story of the Good Samaritan if I had, seeing the plight and peril he was in, coldly passed by on the other side and left him to the untoward chances which his condition invited.

It was a tedious task to try to make him take the proper view of the matter, and, I begun to fear, a thankless, till I was moved to say with some righteous warmth that if he continued obstinate I should not be discouraged but should continue to strive for his good by repeating the dose in that Christian spirit which had led me to administer the first; whereupon he began to seem to see things more rationally and in the end accepted my sincerity while, I am sorry to say, he resolutely refrained from even so much as thanking me for my kindness. I bore this with all meekness and humility, however, reflecting with some sadness upon that ingratitude which is so often met with and so sure an indication of an unregenerate nature. This is a sad world.

(Note:—May I be given grace to persevere in my efforts to amend this untoward state of things in all men, doing my duty by them, and especially by Tom Templeton.)



Nor do I believe I would have gotten the race out of him (for he is most conceited and of a headiness at which I constantly marvel) if it had not been for a happening wholly unlooked for, and, as I regard it, most Providentially sent. It fell out in this wise:—

Tom had been sent by Sir Geoffrey, on a Thursday, to Huntington, there to market some fat cattle which had been got ready for the shambles. He took with him two of his father's men servants, Dickon Waldron and Toby Mallon, for the drove was a good one for size, the beasts had been well fed and were in frolicsome humor, and the bright frosty air made them frisky. I was on the same day sent thither by my father to do some trading, taking a waggon load of corn and sending back a supply of household necessities, father being laid up with his gout and my brother Will having gone to Bristol on a month's visit to our uncle Absalom. Tom started some hours before sun-up and I did not see him at all till after I got to the Red Heifer where I found him at table. His manner was scarce cordial, but I took a seat by him, determined to show that I bore him no ill will but was willing, aye, even desirous to live on terms of amity and Christian charity with him, notwithstanding his many shortcomings and sore delinquencies. He was slow to be moved, however, and even at the end of the good dinner with capital ale which mine host of the Heifer put before us, he was scarcely more than sullenly civil.

He had got a good price for his cattle and was anxious to be home early to hand over his gold safely to Sir Geoffrey. I offered, in view of the disturbed state of the country and the prevalence of foot-pads and highwaymen, to accompany him and thus insure his safety. To this he responded that he need not trouble me, as Dickon and Toby were good stout fellows and he had no doubt if they met with any gentlemen of the road he and they would be able to give a good account of themselves. And so we parted and I saw him no more for the time, and was not sorry that he had refused my offer, since I had important



business to attend to, which however, I would have willingly foregone to be of use to him.

The fact is I had been advised soon after my arrival that a cocking-main would come off in the stables of the Heifer at four of the afternoon, which promised to be worth seeing, as three brace of birds had been brought down from London and three from Bristol, while Squire Walsingham stood ready to pit the Fen Champion (as his big black and red is called, he never having been whipped) against the stranger victor; so that what with the home and foreign talent there was promise of a very pretty entertainment. And a noble sport it was, too. Bristol whipped London from the beginning to the end and then the Squire's Champion whipped the victor.

I took but little part in the affair (betting only small change, and winning 7s. 3d.) only that when the owners and handlers of the cocks began to fight among themselves, and too many of the London bullies were at once set upon the Bristol man who owned the cock which our champion whipped, I pulled them off and made them fight fair and like men. There was some little rebelling at what they called my interference, but I speedily arranged the matter so that all parties accepted my views, and the affair went on comfortably, three pairs fighting at a time; and I allowed them to go on, but man for man.

It was dark, with only a half moon, when I started home, having sent my waggon back hours before. At the Inn I learned that Tom had started an hour ahead of me. Roger felt good, the road was firm, and, having fortified my inner man with the Heifer's roast beef, which was most excellent, and a tankard or two of the old ale, I put my brave horse on his mettle and went flying. I was humming a psalm tune (for I hold not with those who sing the loose and ribald songs of the day), and thinking of nothing in particular, Roger going freely and steadily with a loose rein, when I was suddenly aware of two horsemen who dashed out from the darkness of a dense wood and formed squarely across my path. I pulled Roger up



sharply, much to his discomfort, for he had just warmed to his work,—and was at once saluted with a demand that I should stand and deliver or my life would pay the forfeit; while the light of the moon, shining but fitfully through the thin but fast sailing clouds gleamed on the barrels of two pistols pointed directly at my head, and at a distance of but a few feet. The odds seemed to be prodigiously against me, I thought.

“I am but a poor farmer’s boy, gentlemen,” I said, “on my way home from a small matter of business which hath not left me much silver—surely not enough for Your Honors to bother with.”

“That is for us to judge,” replied one; “be it much or little you will deliver it over, and that right quickly if you value your life.”

I scratched my head in perplexity, for to say truth, I did not know where to have them. I had no fire-arm, and neither my sword nor the cudgel which hung by my saddle-bow would reach them.

“It would be a sorry accounting for me, Your Honors, to have to meet my father without the money, which, small as is the amount, is a great deal to him, he being a poor man. You will surely enter into my feelings and spare me. I would like to meet your wishes in all courtesy, but I hope you will not press me.”

I had been bending over Roger’s neck as he galloped, and had not straightened up, so my highwaymen may have been deceived as to my size. They dropped their hands to their sides, and rode carelessly nearer, one saying:—

“The boy’s a fool!” Then as he got within arm’s reach he added sternly, “Hand over and be quick; we have no time to waste on fools.”

Just then I heard a moan from the roadside and the moon, shining clearly for an instant, showed me a man lying bound in the ditch, and at the same instant I recognized the star in Prince David’s forehead, he being bestridden by the highwayman nearest me. The further one with a curse rode nigh to the edge of the ditch, which



was quite deep and wide but free from water, giving his attention to him who lay there bound, and leaving me to the care of his comrade.

"If I must——" I began, reaching for my cudgel.

"Yes, you must, and no more to be said!"

The cudgel was gripped in my hand and I rose swiftly, straightening out my arm with a quick up and down stroke as I did so. There was a crack as of a nut under the hammer, Prince David bolted down the road, and his rider, with a woful grunt, fell helpless and senseless before the horse had taken a half dozen strides. At the same moment I was aware of a hot streak across the top of my shoulder and felt rather than saw the flash of the fire-arm in the hand of the fellow on the side of the ditch. He had scratched the skin with his leaden pellet. Roger had been uneasy and hard to hold, and was fit to bolt at the moment, for I felt, running up my bridle-arm, the crunch of his teeth on his bit; I swung his head quickly to the left, and with a yell he knows well the meaning of, let him go.

He shot like a bolt straight at the highwayman's horse, rising as he did so, and struck him squarely amidships, knocking man and horse pell-mell into the ditch, following himself, with such speed that I wondered where he would leave us all; and thus wondering I placed my hands on the pommel and leaped to the left. I struck the incline of the ditch and stumbled in a jumble to the bottom, rolling over Tom (for it was he, as I had guessed) as I did so. I had scarcely got on my feet when a second shot sounded in my ears and my hat went spinning, and almost before I knew what was going forward the fellow was on me with his naked sword.

He slit my left coat sleeve before I could draw. But I did draw, and with the first clash of our blades, I began to feel sorry for him, for, of a truth, no man ought ever to touch a sword until he hath learned how to use it; and this fellow was most lamentably awkward. I gave him a chance, demanding his surrender, but he refused it with



an oath, for which sin so defiantly committed I ran him through the neck and so he went to grass.

I quickly unbound and ungagged Tom and found him not much damaged, but with a prodigious headache from a blow from behind, the fellows having buffeted him roundly. I whistled for Roger, and mounting him, soon found Prince David a few furlongs off, quietly awaiting developments by the side of a hay-stack in a farm-yard. Riding back Tom met me in great glee. He had searched the two robbers, neither of them dead but both helpless, and had found all the good guineas of which they had relieved him. Besides these we came in for two swords (of but indifferent value), and the fire-arms, four in number, and the holsters to hold them. And so home.

The ale at the Red Heifer had been, it seems, too potent for Dickon and Toby, and Tom had left them in a drunken sleep, too proud, as he shamefacedly confessed, to seek me out and ask my company home after his churlish refusal of my offer. He was quite penitent, after a fashion, and acknowledged all my kindness to him but obstinately (for he is as pig-headed a fellow as ever was), taking occasion to hint that with all his gratitude he still felt that our relations would be bettered by an abstention on my part from too much concern in his private affairs. And I was surprised to find that he rated my help in the matter of the highwaymen at a higher value than he did the faithful wounds I had given him as a friend and a Christian. I was almost discouraged at finding his perceptions so lamentably warped.

I took him home and then came on to the Mere, where I would have got safely to bed (for it was now beyond all hours) without disturbing anybody if Roger had not foolishly neighed at the sight of the stable, whereupon every misbegotten dog on the place began to yelp and bark. This aroused my father, who, calling me to the door of his chamber, rated me for a roystering ne'er-do-weel in that I was out so late. I admitted the cock-fight but said nothing as to the highwaymen, and was sent to bed with



a warning that my case would be considered in the morning.

Before we had got over breakfast, however, Sir Geoffrey was in and making a great to-do over the affair, saying I was Tom's preserver; and mother was fussing with my curls while Betty was piling my plate with the choice of the board, and looking as she did the day when my Towser whipped the brindle Bully from St. Ives. Father said little while Sir Geoffrey was singing my praises, but at last observed—

"The scamp shall have his deserts. He was cock-fighting at the Heifer and must e'en pay the penalty. I'll have no such rake-helly son in my house."

"But," expostulated Sir Geoffrey, "you don't seem to understand, Sir William, that the boy encountered single-handed and almost unarmed, two highwaymen who carried fire-arms and swords, overcame them, and (I trust), killed them both, and rescued my boy Tom and brought home my guineas. I tell you he is a hero, sir, of who you ought to be proud, and if he is to be punished for cock-fighting I demand that I shall be permitted to serve the penalty."

"Why, as to that Sir Geoffrey," cried father; "the boy is a Baldwin; and is a Baldwin to leave his neighbor bound in a ditch at the mercy of murderous highwaymen, or is he to turn tail because they outnumber him? Nay, he did but his duty and he may thank God for the chance to do it. As for your penalty, you are to sit and eat your breakfast which, I warrant, you left the Hall without."

I have heard no more of the penalty but that night I waked to find my mother with her arms about me weeping and thanking God for me.



## CHAPTER VII

### HE OUTFRINNETH A HORSE, AND WINNETH BY A NECK

1st November.

I WAS two days in writing my last entry and by rights another date belongs in the middle of it. I shall try to finish the story of how I won Prince David to-day and to-night, even if I have to sit up till morning. I shall beg Betty for an extra supply of candles, as I am growing mighty weary of this undertaking and it must be done before I sleep. For to-day concludes my imprisonment, and to-morrow the hounds do meet at Hedge Hall, and Roger needs exercise as much as I do.

May the good Lord deliver me from any necessity for earning my bread by the pursuit of a clerkly calling. I would rather be a plough-boy; and I have no fancy for that vocation neither, the which is too much like that pursued by Satan, who, it seems, also walked to and fro upon the earth. (This I formerly conceived to be a rare good jest, but when I once tried it on the Rev. Mr. Balsley I could not bring him to see it; and he gravely discoursed to me upon the difference between the occupation of Satan which is to seek opportunity to do evil, and that of the plough-boy who goeth to and fro in order to prepare the soil that it may bring forth more abundantly the fruits of the earth for the use of all God's creatures. The good preacher spent nigh upon an hour on this discourse, and while I trust I felt properly grateful to him for that kindly interest which made him give so much of his time to my enlightenment, I at the same time took upon myself inwardly a vow never again to set myself up for a wit. Indeed Mistress Eleanor Hedges hath more than once certified me in the kindest way



in the world that I need never essay such a part, that I am too slow-witted and stupid; re-assuring me, however, with the observe that Issachar did not do badly after all. And for this and all other such mercies at her hands, and they be not a few nor many of them less nipping, I humbly strive to be thankful.)

I wonder where she is this bright autumnal day when all is so glorious without and the wind coming in at my casement hath a touch of softness in it which promises a proper cloudy sky in the morning? I wonder where that ninny Lord Lovering is?

I had been over to the north part of the estate to look after some ditching father is having done there to reclaim some rich marsh land and was coming home by way of Hedge Hall (it was last Thursday was a week), thinking that if I should by chance meet Miss Eleanor I would ask that lately grown-most-stately young person whether she would not like to trade her mincing Lord Lovering for a fine poodle I had seen in Huntingdon—this merely by way of signifying to her that she was displaying altogether too much interest in the King Charles spaniel puppy that hath strayed in where he does not belong, when, missing her and dawdling along upon the road who should come also but Master Thomas Templeton upon his black horse Prince David, his cracked crown wholly healed and with a monstrous fine new feather in his hat. I louted my best bow and made my best leg to His Worship, offering him befitting compliments upon his brave appearance.

“Thou art as scurvy a knave as ever I met, Big John,” he cried, after he had done laughing; “and I know not why I should love so pestilent a fellow, but I do and I cannot help it. O, that the good Lord would but endue me with the length of reach and bulk of bone and weight of beef that would enable me to give you the trouncing you deserve.”

“But He won’t,” I replied. “It is only to those of the Remnant who are endowed with grace in a measure equally great that He giveth such physical endowment as fitteth



them for the beneficent work they have to do for the good and the everlasting wholesome of their fellows who are not so fortunately equipped. If thou hadst but the grace thou mightest hope for other help, but thou art in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity, from the which, however, I am minded to pluck thee as a brand from the burning; and I'll do it, too, if it takes a leg—one of yours, be sure."

"What are you prowling around Hedge Hall for?" he demanded. "If Lord Lovering lays eyes upon you he may take the trouble to drub you home with his tasselled riding-whip."

"Give yourself no uneasiness, good Master Thomas, as to matters between the debonair Lord Lovering and your poor servant, John Baldwin. Thou art a mischief-maker, for thy insinuation hath already bred up in me, in the twinkling of an eye, as it were, a mighty craving and a yearning hope that this puissant knight of my lady's chamber shall conceive it to be his pleasure or duty to show some small part of his undoubted prowess upon the lowly clod-hopper whom he hath deigned to honor with a merry jape or two. Truly it would be worth living for and if you know a way to bring it to pass I pray you, if you love me as you do protest, that you will do me the kindly office to set it in order for me."

"Big John, I am ashamed of you. Why are you always so set upon brawling? Why will you not consent to live a peaceable life?"

"Nay, you have strangely misread me, Master Cracked-Crown," I replied, for his words seemed soothly beyond reason, "if you think I am fond of brawling. I am of all men a man of peace; it is in the seeking of peace and the ensuing thereof that I have my chief troubles, induced by the perversity of others. Could I bring all men to the right way of thinking and the acceptance of sound judgment upon all things (a condition to secure which I do most earnestly and steadfastly apply myself), there would be peace and a tranquil pleasure in life for all. But it hath not come to pass, much as I would have it so. Nay, even



in jest I would not have you so misconceive me. I am a man of peace—if I were not I should not be always in strife.”

Then did this son of Belial lay back upon his horse and roar and laugh with such heartiness that the tears flooded his gooseberry eyes and I thought he would lose his seat. Peal after peal of his idiotic cachination filled the air and pained mine ears for I could see that there was nothing to laugh at, nothing had occurred or been said to tickle his risibles. Verily it was the laughter of the fool, which is like to the crackling of thorns under a pot. At last, for very shame to see one in God’s image making so unseemly an exhibition of himself, I laid hands upon him, straightening him swiftly and firmly up in his saddle.

“Give over this braying like the wild ass of the desert, or I’ll stand thee on thy head in yonder puddle,” I cried; but it was to no purpose, for he rolled about in his fool’s mirth as weak as a baby, till I had at last fairly gathered him from the saddle and he realized that I meant what I said.

“Nay, nay—” he shrieked; “I’ll stop, dear John; but you are so deliciously droll I cannot help laughing.”

I fear me it was not so much because he saw the reason which I strove to insert into his feeble wits but more because he knew I would have him in the puddle if he did not, that he finally shut off. And even then he continued to snort and chuckle in a witless muffled way till I began to glow with a righteous wrath and, as I did not really wish to ruin his new feather and laced coat I took another means to bring my gentleman to terms; for I was minded he should not trifle with me any longer.

“And now,” I remarked, “we will settle another little matter that, by your own remissness alone hath been standing open already too long. When shall we race, your horse Prince David against the boy John Baldwin, as formally proposed by me some weeks ago?”

He looked at me with an aspect of amazement; whether it were assumed or not I know not.



"And are you really in honest meaning as to this absurd challenge?" he asked.

"There is nothing absurd in my challenge and as your friend and well-wisher I would advise that you at least assume my honesty if you do not find it easy to believe. For," I continued, "that race shall be run."

"And you will be fool enough to stake your horse Roger against my horse Prince David, that you can outrun him a mile and repeat?"

"You to ride your horse and I to run stripped to shirt and small clothes."

"You are tempting me to commit highway robbery, John. Do you not know that save Sir Charles's mare Sylvia there is no horse in all the Fen country can catch Prince David? Man, I will not consent to rob you of your horse which is a good one and which I know you do most properly prize, just because you are so foolish as to dare me to it. I am too much your friend to take such an advantage of you."

How long ought one to be content with answering a fool according to his folly? My just indignation at his perverseness was rapidly rising.

"I know that Prince David is fleet, friend Thomas; but I am fleeter. I can outrun him and shall do so next Saturday evening at six of the clock. The course shall be from the landing place at the south end of the Mere, across the fields, fences, ditches and all, to the smithy just east of the Hay Cock Inn. The distance is sixteen furlongs and two rods to an inch, the which rods shall be thrown in for good measure. Reaching the smithy there shall be a wait of fifteen minutes for the refreshment of the man and the beast when the return mile shall be run. Master Charles Hedges, mounted on the mare Sylvia, shall be the judge for the man; you shall choose whom you will for your part."

"And you are really in earnest, John?"

"If you ask me that once again, or do not at once leave off all this shilly-shallying and agree of your own free-will



and unaided choice to this race on the terms proposed by me I shall incontinently proceed to pummel your eyes purple once more and bung that nose of yours as I did before," and I laid one hand on the bridle of his horse and the other on the collar of his coat.

"You are an ill-conditioned and brutal beast," he replied, testily. "You need a lesson and I will teach it you. I will run the race as you propose and I will win your horse, and when won, I shall keep him, never fear."

"Do not grow sullen and conceited, Tom," I answered; "do you look carefully to the running of your horse and give yourself no concern as to my part of the enterprise. I shall have Prince David neighing in the stables at the Mere next Sabbath morning but will lend him to you occasionally when you wish to ride abroad. I have insisted upon this race for your soul's health. So perverted has your nature become that you have seen fit, being seduced and misled thereunto by the Evil One, to malign and traduce those legs with which the Creator hath seen fit to endow me, namely, that portion of them which is between the knee and the ankle, in the doing of which you not only bring me into contumely, but also depreciate God's good handiwork. In the which foolishness I wish you to know that you have done no injury to my feelings for I am above such small and envious slurs; but you have betrayed that lack of respect for me personally as testifieth in you a frame of mind toward me which will make you froward and unresponsive to my efforts to guide you in the right way; the which frowardness it hath been borne in on me must be taken out of you. If I did not love you I should not insist but would leave you to the workings of your own sinful nature."

"Very well, Master John," he rejoined. "I will be there at six of the clock and by the dawn of the Sabbath you will be less rich in horse flesh than now; but you will have more horse sense," and shaking his bridle rein, he cantered off.

He was as good as his word. We met at the Mere at



the time appointed last Saturday evening, Charles Hedges with me, while Tom was accompanied by Walter, the younger son of Squire Walsingham, who served as judge on his part. I was ill-pleased to find quite a throng of idle ne'er-do-weels at the meeting place drawn thither by curiosity. I had said nothing about the race myself, but what can be expected from such a scant-thought as Tom? He boasted that he had noised the thing about because he deemed the lesson he was to give me would be more salutary if administered before a number of witnesses. He harangued me to this effect before them all, charging me with being a conceited fellow who needed chastening. I could scarce believe my ears. I, who have labored so faithfully and unselfishly to cure others of towering and sinful pride of opinion to be now charged with the same grievous distemper. It was too absurd for answer and turning to the judges I called for the word.

It was a pretty race. The meadows were firm as we have had but little rain of late and gave good footing to both man and horse. Tom very wisely refrained from pushing Prince David too much at the outset and I had no intention of using myself up too rapidly. I knew the course a little better, perhaps, than Tom did and thus had some advantage over him when we came to the marshy places. In the ploughed and fallow ground it was heavy going for both of us; but here the wise foresight of the benevolent Creator was made manifest; for while the horse's feet sank deep into the soft ground, mine, being broad and long and presenting a generous surface to the earth bore me safely up, and I was not hindered by having to pull them out of the clinging mire.

On we went, over the meadows, through the marshes, leaping the walls and fences and wading and splashing through the ditches so that when we got to the smithy it was a question whether the horse's natural coat or my liberal plastering of the mud of the Fens was the blacker. I reached the smithy just one rod ahead of the horse amid the cheers of another mob of varlets which, to my chagrin



was waiting for us. Here I drank sparingly of the grateful water from the smithy well, refusing the ale which I knew would hinder more than help, while Tom washed out the Prince's mouth and walked him to and fro under the roadside trees to cool him off. At the end of fifteen minutes the word was given and we were off again for the return run.

This time neither horse nor man was spared but we ran our best after easily warming up in the first quarter. The way seemed much heavier to me than when I first covered it and once or twice I thought surely the horse would beat me. But I called inwardly upon the Lord of Hosts for strength and courage, and both were vouchsafed me. I do believe I could not have run another rod, and felt it heavily, as with heaving chest, trembling legs and a heart that seemed to be packed to bursting I staggered forward and fell at the foot of the tree with Prince David's hot breath blowing blastily on the back of my neck.

I had forgotten that the Sabbath begins at six of the clock Saturday evening. The noise of the shouting and hurrahing greatly scandalized my father and when he heard the cause he gave me appointment to meet him in his study Monday morning after breakfast. There he judged my case and gave his sentence. It will expire in five hours.

So now to prayers and to bed, dog-tired with this tedious scratching with a gray goose quill, the which is an evil tool to work with.

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER VIII

### HE RESCUETH LITTLE DOROTHY

BALDWINSMERE, 27th December, 1638.

My brother John lieth easily now sleeping like an infant, the potion which I gave him an hour ago having wrapped him in kindly, and I trust to God, strengthening slumber; and at his earnest asking, I, his sister Betty, will now try to set down what hath happened and make clear why it is that he lieth here as weak as a kitten, his great frame a mere bony structure, the sweet color gone from his cheeks where it used to rival the delicate pink of the rose-leaf; his bold and merry eyes sunken and till now dull and heavy with painful suffering, and his long curling brown hair at last, Heaven be praised for its mercies, moist with the dampness which returning life brings to him.

For nigh upon a fortnight hath he tossed about upon his bed daft as a loon for the most part, and not knowing even those who nearest and dearest, ministered unto him.

Oh, it is hard to bear to look into the eyes of a loved one, those dear eyes which have always lighted at the sight of you and find in them no longer the gleam of recognition but rather the hard, dull, unseeing (and yet that doth not express it) look of an almost dead dumb brute; and never shall I forget the wail of anguish that came from our mother when she first saw that look and realized that her bright, brave, loving boy saw no more in her than in a block or a stone.

I was fain to gather her up, for she fell upon the floor as one stricken with a mortal hurt, and carry her to her own chamber where in time I comforted her with the assurance (of which my own wrung heart was not convinced) that this would soon pass away and we would have him back again. Indeed our own father, strong proud



and self-controlled man that he is as if made of iron and not a creature of flesh and blood, turned pale and trembled when he first met that look; and he went forth nor stayed not, to the closet off his chamber where he doth ever go to pray; and for the space of an hour no sound came from thence but groans that were choked at their birth; and I knew that he was wrestling mightily with our God and our Father for the youngest of his house.

And sure am I that never till this time did our father feel and know how dear to him was his wayward boy. When he came out he was composed and calm and strong as he is wont to be; but never since then hath he seen the look again without a quick tightening of his lips which drives them pale and blue and a swift darting as of a shoot of pain in his eyes. Mighty high he hath held his head, seeking to hide the fear that hath had him in a numbing grip during all these days; and when Sir Geoffrey, Sir Charles and Mr. Cromwell and others came to praise the nobility of the deed which laid our poor John low and to say how much they hoped that despite his desperate state his life would yet be spared, my father's voice was always even and firm; and to say truth it sounded cold and unfeeling to me when he replied:—

“You do me and my son John great courtesy and kindness in calling with your sympathetic enquiries and good wishes of which we would not have you ignorant that we are deeply sensible. As to what my son John has done why, look you, he is a Baldwin and there is no more to be said; as to his recovery he is in the hands of God Who doeth all things well and Whose purposes we may not enter into. He hath given and if He taketh away who am I that I should repine or find fault? I trust I shall have the grace if the worst shall come to say with the man of God of olden time, ‘blessed be the name of the Lord.’ For do we not know that He doth not willingly afflict the children of men? Is not His mind to us-ward gracious and loving-kind and of tender mercy?”

“You do take it with marvellous composure,” bluntly



replied Mr. Cromwell who hath little softness of speech; and his tone was almost that of reproof I thought.

“Nay,” said father, “your sympathy is most precious to us my dear Cromwell; but you will understand that I cannot go more fully into my feelings. It were not becoming.”

And all through his converse and especially while he was showing most serenely the spirit of resignation with which he accepted this thing of God’s ordering, my eyes were upon his hand which clasped the arm of his chair; for I could not look upon his face; and I saw that he gripped like a drowning man and his nails were white and bloodless. What stern discipline it must have been that hath made our father so equably poised at all times and hath given him such marvellous self-control.

And yet when the time for mirth is on no one can be more charmingly sweet and gracious, aye, even at times playful than he; and to me he hath never been stern but always loving and gentle and indulgent and courteous with a punctilio that is perfect; but to the boys is he a disciplinarian and rigidly requiring. Was he born so? Will saith that once he overheard Sir Geoffrey and our father over their wine after dinner recounting their days at college, and that it seemed to him that father must have been what he called “a roystering blade in his day.” If this means nothing worse than that he was a little wild, as young men are I believe, prone to be, it may well be so for that there is hot blood in the Baldwins I have always heard; but it cannot mean more; for if ever man walked the earth with pure and upright heart and unstained soul that man is my father; and so I told Will—aye, and the poor boy lying there so weak and so pale and so forlorn is, in these things, as like his father as one star is like in its clear shining to another.

But there! I am not performing my task. The light of the sun fails as I write; the maid has brought the broth he is to take if he awakes during the night, and my own supper. I have lit my candles; the door of his closet,



standing open, leaves him in shadow so that he may sleep; and I have the night before me for the work he hath given me. I will not be disturbed except that once or twice mother will be gliding in to bend over him for a moment; and I will hear my father's door open at times so that he may glance down the hall to see that all is quiet, for well he knoweth I will call him if he should be needed.

Thou must glide softly, good quill, for yonder lies a hero, who needs to sleep and must not be waked while you and I are making record of his brave deed. No one shall hinder us, for I shall allow no one else to be with him in the night; and so it hath been ever since he hath lain there that I, alone, have watched by his bed at night. When the day comes others may take him; but at night, when the darkness bringeth strange uncanny imaginings and the leeches say the sick are at their weakest no one else shall take the place that belongeth to his sister Betty only.

How dear he is to me! I have ever understood him better than anyone else, even our mother, hath; and he hath always understood me. He is two years my junior and yet I have such confidence in him he might be ten years my senior. I wonder if I shall ever love anyone else as I do him? Nay, it is impossible that I should. For the which I thank God.

He hath ever been fond of babies, at which Will hath jested, saying he is naught himself but a great baby and hath a natural love for his kind. He saith this always from a safe distance when John can only shake his great fist at him and laugh softly. But I do look upon it differently. For to me it seemeth that this dauntless fellow who fears nothing on earth but our mother's tears, not even father's sternness (for while he beareth what punishment father giveth him, which is not little nor light, and is always respectful, yet moveth he not from any position he hath taken nor any opinion he hath formed because of any such punishment any more than is a rock moved by the summer breeze), to me it seemeth, I say, that he



could not be what he is, so brave and good and unselfish if he had not this sweet love for little helpless, sinless things in his heart. Could anything be better to make stout the heart?

And so Ruth Taber's baby daughter, Dorothy, now four years old hath been John's sweetheart ever since she had wit enough to read the look that dwells in John's big soft brown eyes. Before Ruth, who was of our housemaid force and the best of all was married to Ned, who was then second as he is now first keeper John was a great favorite of hers, and she was of his; and to give splendor to the occasion of her marriage, and a special honor the boy spent all his savings, upwards of two pounds, on a bright yellow laced coat to wear at the wedding. The poor fellow hath no sense of harmony and fitness and never looked so badly in his life as then in a garb the hue of which killed every tint of his lovely color; but he told no one—going to the shop in Huntingdon and bringing home the flaming thing by stealth to smite us all dumb when the parson had come. Poor John! He will ever need his sister Betty to choose his apparel for him, thank Heaven.

When little Dorothy came John almost took up his abode at the cottage by the Mere-End. He was there day and night—as much as mother would allow. He was like one discovering some new and wonderful thing. His talk was of the baby continually. He worshipped at the cradle as one worships at the altar of his idolatry. He sought to win the love of the tiny mite before it knew enough to draw milk from its mother's breast. He brought to it his toys and playthings; his bows and arrows; his sling of deer thongs and leather; his bat and his little axe; the new oars that Old Bevins had made him, with his name carved upon them; at last he laid his most precious possession, the old hanger which our great-grandfather, Sir Henry, brought back with him from the French wars whither he went with Sir Richard Cromwell nigh upon a hundred years ago, at the feet of the wee maiden, with an air of mingled pain as one who hath brought himself by stern will-power to



make a great sacrifice, and of triumph as of one who, having made the only lacking and the supreme effort knoweth that at last the object of his desire hath been gained. When, shortly (for Dorothy came at the heel of the winter), the garden and the fields were filled with flowers then he carried them by armfuls for the delight and delectation of the baby, his queen; only that in this he showed little discrimination, and while he ruthlessly ravaged poor mother's posy beds for larkspurs and pinks, for roses and hollyhocks, for buttercups and daisies, for sweet williams and violets, he no less zealously gathered nettles and thistles, burdocks and gympsums, and even one day came with a nosegay vast for size and perfume, of the blossomed tops of the onions which mother had allowed to run to seed. The fruits of the earth he laid at her feet before she had a tooth in her head and being extremely fond himself of crisp, raw turnips, he placed on her shrine the first of the season. In the bigness of his heart he showered upon her everything that was desirable or precious in his own eyes; and that whimsical quality of his nature which makes it incredible to him that any can have a different liking or see things other than doth he made all of his gifts things most appropriate for the babe in long clothes. To crown all he painted out the name of our mother and rechristened his boat—the "Nancy" became the "Dorothy." There was a trembling of laughter and tears in mother's eyes when she saw this; but she only said "I knew that some day another would crowd me out of my boy's heart but I scarcely expected it so soon as this."

Mistress Dorothy never made any mistake concerning John. She knew from the first that he had been sent into the world to serve and worship but particularly to serve, her. She hath been an imperious and requiring tyrant and he hath been an abject slave, rejoicing like St. Paul, in his bonds. And in truth she hath been and is a most winsome little fairy, whom it seems impossible to spoil by petting and indulgence, the which trait I am firmly persuaded she owes to her big, awkward, loyal lover; for



she hath drunk in from his eyes and his great heart his sweet, unselfish, uncorruptible nature.

When she began to totter about John was wild, and it was he who guided her steps and cared for her that she struck not her foot against a stone. And it was a beautiful picture—the great, eager, clumsy fellow, giving his whole mind to the blue-eyed toddler!

And so it hath ever been; what time he could spare from his horses and his dogs, his hawks and his hounds, his fishing and his hunting, his boating and his single-stick, fisticuffs and fencing lessons, his tops and his tutor, hath been freely bestowed on the child; and I have observed that of all, he hath always been willingest to leave his books to go to her.

Dorothy's health hath, too, been a matter of the gravest concern to him. At every little distemper accident and ailment he hath been filled with a sleepless anxiety. When she cut her teeth and was peevish he betrayed a mental strain upon him which bade fair to make him ill. A year ago Dorothy was seized with the croup and for one whole night the physician sat by her bedside. She was, in truth, very, very ill. That night John was not in at prayers and our father looked grave and stern for he is usually regular and prompt. So I slipped on my hood after prayers and went to search for him. I knew or thought I did, where I would be likely to find him; and there he was—at Ruth's. By the physician's direction all but the mother and he were excluded from the room where the sick child lay hovering between life and death; and John I found sitting on a bench outside the cottage. He raised not his head as I came near nor did he seem aware of my presence until I spoke. Then he lifted his face and the light of the moon showed it pale and drawn and wan and the tears he had been plentifully shedding seemed to have washed all the bright color out of his cheek. His look was so woe-begone and wretched that my heart stood still from fear.

"Oh, John, John," I cried; "she is not dead! Do not tell me that Dorothy is dead!"



“No,” he replied, hollowly, “she is not dead.”

He looked wearily about into the darkness for a moment.

“No, she is not dead, but the physician says he hath done all he can do and that if she do recover now it will be the good Lord’s doing, not his.”

At this a gleam came into his eyes and catching my wrist he cried:—

“Pray! We will pray! On your knees Betty, on your knees with me and pray for Dorothy. For where two or three are gathered together in His name He will fulfil their petitions, and here are two. We will save her life.”

And drawing me down beside him he began to pray so touchingly that my heart was melted and I wept without restraint. It was the simple prayer of a great child asking with perfect confidence and assured faith and asking of a Father of infinite love and compassion Who could be touched by our griefs and could not fail to answer.

And from that hour the baby mended.

ELIZABETH BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE RESCUE OF LITTLE DOROTHY; *continued*

28th December.

ALAS for my brave resolution of last night to finish the story I had been set to write, before the dawn should come. In truth I have been much wearied by my nightly vigils; and pausing to lean my cheek upon my hand to think of John and Dorothy and how lovingly God did answer his prayers for her recovery I fell to dreaming with my eyes open and then, before I was aware, I passed to dreaming with my eyes shut; and when I opened them again the cocks were crowing, the new day had come, and my dear patient was beginning to toss about as if to wake. I marveled that mother did not rouse me when she crept in to look upon her boy, but she saw he was doing well and knowing I was weary had not the heart to wake me. It turned out all well enough and no harm done; but when I think of what might have happened I could wish she had not left me undisturbed.

When at last he was fully waked and I had given him his broth and joyed to see the light coming back and growing stronger in his dear eyes, his first word was for Dorothy, who is doing well and is as lively as a cricket; and then his ghost's whisper asked if I had written the story, as he had wished. I was fain to confess my neglect and carelessness, but told him I would finish to-night, and warned him that it would be an o'er-long story for him to read when he got strong again; to which he said, weakly:—

“Make it as long as you wish to, Betty, I shall never read it. I do not read over what I write myself; it is only that I would have my grand-children know what manner of man their progenitor was, and to keep for them the record of God's goodness to me.”



Was there ever such a preposterous boy? Here he is, only now some six months past his sixteenth birthday, and he must needs be bothering his poor wits about his grandchildren! For all his prodigious stature he hath ne'er a hair to his face which is as smooth as Dorothy's own. And yet in many things he hath the mature judgment of a man already; but in most the sweet innocence and simplicity of a boy even younger than he is. He is a queer mixture of shrewd good sense beyond his years and transparent credulousness and faith in the honor and honesty of others, with a simple daintiness of thought which belongeth to the child at its mother's knee, making of him the most sweetest human being, save our mother herself, that the world holds. And if the Greeks had a god handsomer—but that were impossible.

His grand-children! Who doth he dream will marry him, the portionless younger son of an only fairly well-furnished knight of ancient lineage? There is no one who knows and values him but his big sister Betty; and a man may not marry his grandmother, nor his sister neither.

It is good to know that, since he will not read this himself (and I know he hateth books), I may write what I please and have no fear that what I say shall meet his eye and breed within him a sinful pride. For he would be vain did he but realize what a man he is. He never will, for the knowing would at once make him what he is not. But your grand-children, my own brother, shall know the truth so far as it may be in their aunt Betty's power to set it forth, to the end that they may have the just and proper pride in their ancestor they ought to feel.

It is now seventeen days, and it was, therefore, on the 11th of this month that it all happened. The Mere being, as every one knoweth, only a deeper part of the Fen lands, too deep to be reclaimed itself, hath had its size and volume increased by the use that is made of it to receive and hold water discharged therein from great drainage ditches which make dry and tillable many hundreds of acres of the Baldwinsmere estate. It hath no outlet to the Ouse, and



too many miles of ditching and embankment would be necessary to give it one; so it remaineth a beautiful sheet of water, quite deep in places and well stocked with fish by my father's father and kept preserved with care.

At the Mere End, near to the cottage wherein Ruth doth live, there is kept a boat for the use in fishing and pleasure boating of the people and retainers on the estate. A half mile round to the west is the boat-house where Will and John have their boats, some with sails and some without, but all of small dimensions. The boat at the Mere End is equipped with both oars and a sail.

On the morning of that dreadful day some of the laborers had used the boat, going some distance from the shore to dip up with a net fish for food, as my father alloweth them to do. Returning they loosely tied the little craft to the stake carelessly leaving the sail still standing. Laborers were engaged not fifty yards distant building an embankment. The day was shrewdly cold, the ground being frozen on the surface, but not deep, with a thin skim of ice on the margin of the Mere till the sun had thawed it.

Children of the cottagers from different parts of the estate were playing about, roving and running, as is their custom, wherever they were pleased to go; and little Dorothy was with a group not far from her father's home. It was about ten of the clock in the forenoon when Tommy Selden, a well grown and manly lad of nine, son to William Selden, and Jemmy Lambert, aged eight, and little Sammy Elliot, only six, all children of our people, coming upon the empty and idle boat and tiring of their play, clambered into it taking little Dorothy, well and warmly wrapped up and clothed with them. It is thought they had no purpose to put out from the shore, but in their play rocking the boat and running to and fro in it they speedily unwound the rope with which it had been so insecurely fixed to the stake, and a sudden gust of wind coming up the sail filled and the little craft was sent out into the bosom of the Mere a full fifty feet or more from the shore almost before it was understood that it was adrift. And this was not



seen from the shore till the cries of the children drew attention to them.

I was at the back of the house taking the air, mother was busy with the maids in the still-room, and father was sitting at the window, looking over the steward's books, Will at the stable and John a full fourth of a mile off, training his dogs. When Jemmy and Sammy began to shriek with terror we saw that Tommy Selden was making desperate efforts to use the oars. He looked very pale but determined, poor little man, as he bravely struggled; but knowing nothing of how to help he did nought but make a bad matter worse; while the fright in which all the others had been thrown set them to pushing and crowding to and fro, tipping and turning the boat in the water, stretching out their hands and crying for rescue.

All but Dorothy! She, the little woman, sat quietly upon one of the thwarts looking mighty serious but clinging steadfastly to the side; and no sound came from her tight closed little mouth.

All might have been well if the poor children had not been so panic-smitten that they could not think to sit still the while a boat could come to save them. But who can blame them? Grown folk have been known to behave even more foolishly under such stress of fear and terror.

We all ran at once to the shore, but we had not reached it nor had the poor children time to catch the meaning of our cries to them to keep quiet when, with a second gust of wind which seemed to fairly lift the boat out of the water, it was overturned and all went to the bottom. The pity of the drowning cries of the poor dears as they struggled and gasped and sunk still fills my ears and will, I fear, never leave me.

The laborers came thronging from the embankment, father was still gazing perplexedly and without proper understanding from the window, and one was speeding to the stables for Will when we heard a shout and saw John running swiftly toward us. Mother and I cried to the men to save the children, but they stood stricken dumb and



helpless and made no move but only gazed with eyes filled with horror at the place where the boat lay overturned and where, one after the other, oh, piteous sight! the little bodies came to the surface once or twice, struggling convulsively and gasping and gurgling, only to sink back again into the deep, icy water—for there were twenty feet at least there at that spot.

My father had come flying down the steps of the house and Will was seen speeding towards the boat-house for a boat when the sound of John running came nearer and nearer. Turning we saw that he was throwing off coat, hat and doublet, and stripping to his small clothes. Coming closer to the shore he cried with a mighty shout: "Stand back! Out of the way!" and his face as he came was the face of an angel—aye, the face of a god. Never saw I anything, save a bird, move so swiftly. "Dorothy is lost," I shrieked, as he approached and he seemed to halt almost imperceptibly, as if he staggered, but only for the briefest instant, and then he came on again faster than ever.

Father cried to him "Wait, John, for the boat! Will will bring the boat." But my brother was as if he had not heard, and brushing brusquely against our father the brave lad shot out from the land with a leap that seemed fully twenty feet and plunged beneath the water with a great splash that covered the Mere with swirling foam for a space of many yards around. Father scrambled to his feet in haste and threw a look of disgust and wrath at the spot where John had disappeared, which endured but a moment, however, being supplanted instantly by one of gravest anxiety.

It seemed an age to us, all silent now, mother wringing her hands and weeping, father standing staring and motionless as a statue, the laborers open-mouthed and stupid, before the dear lad came back to sight; and then he only came up to breathe, supporting himself by one hand on the side of the boat, shaking the water out of his eyes and long curls, and his parted lips giving a strange, strangling sound. But he remained in sight for only an instant and even while



father was crying to him to wait till Will fetched a boat he disappeared again like a diving duck leaving bubbles and white froth behind him.

And then smote upon our ears the piercing, thrilling scream of poor Ruth, who had just come to her door and had time to take in the knowledge of the terrible thing that had happened. She came like a deer, shrieking and crying, her long hair falling loose and streaming in the wind, and would have cast herself into the water but for the restraint my father and some of the men put upon her—and it needed three or four to hold her. From all directions now, men, women and children were running and crying when, much more quickly than before John rose again to the surface and clasping a burden to his breast came swimming to the shore and laid poor Jemmy's body at our feet.

Father strove to catch his sleeve but with a reproachful look and no word the grand lad plunged again into the water and so passed quickly from sight. Three times more did he this each time bringing a poor drowned body and each time showing less and less strength. The last body was that of our dear little Dorothy; and the agony in his eyes as he strained forward with it in his arms feebly striving, but with no hope in his face was more than my poor wit can tell of. He stumbled as he neared the shore and half cast the limp little figure into my father's arms (for father had waded out to his shoulders to meet him), and then slipping back went under the cruel water and would have been lost but for Will, who, coming furiously on with the boat by some means caught his heavy hair, and pulling him half in made shift to reach the land with John inanimate, trailing his long legs in the wake.

We dragged him out and set to work to restore him. A rider was despatched on Roger for the physician. Before he came by dint of hard work and the free use of brandy my dear lad was brought to consciousness. His first enquiry was for Dorothy.

And strange to say, Dorothy, the last to be brought from the depths of the Mere was the only one of the four who



was saved alive. This my father accounts for by the happening that the child had her mouth tightly closed when she went under and must not have opened it and so the water flowed not into her lungs. Besides, she had a little cape or cloak on her shoulders, made of good thick woollen stuff and having no opening save where it was slipped over her head, and so rested on her shoulders covering her chest, the which we think was pushed and held up over her mouth by the water; for so it was, turned up over her head, when she was brought forth. But she was very still and seemed dead, at first.

God spare me from again witnessing such grief as was shown over the bodies of the poor little men to whom no effort of ours nor skill of the physicians could bring back life.

John would hear or listen to nothing or nobody till he was assured by the evidence of his own senses that Dorothy was and would remain alive. Then he suffered himself to be led home and put to bed (very weak and shivering, for it was cold and the water as ice and he had been a long time in it), with an abundance of potations hot and strong prepared by our mother's own hands. The next day he was stiff and sore and chilled, in spite of all his gallant efforts to seem well and debonair. The second day he waked with a high fever, and soon passed into a delirium.

For more than a fortnight did the fever burn in his veins, and he tossed about his bed, now bickering good-naturedly with Will or Tom Templeton; now babbling with Dorothy or jesting with Nell Hedges, to whom he paid many a most ludicrous bungling compliment; now moralizing on his own and other people's sinfulness and praying for its amendment; and all the time saying those things of his mother and his unworthy sister Betty which assured us that our places in his heart would always remain sacred; which I do not, but my mother doth, most surely deserve.

He hath said little of father, but that always dutiful and loving; and once we nearly died of laughing (though weep-



ing would have seemed best for us then) when he held a long and curious discourse with the Rev. Elijah Balsley who is the most tedious godly and the most godly tedious man I ever saw, but who yet hath most sound views upon our duty as Christians and children of the Remnant to resist the evil encroachments of them in high places who make a mock of our God and would fain bring the people of the realm into bondage to the false proud and worldly Pope of Rome. He hath also a shrewd discernment of the good things of this life, and, his sermons preached and his prayers said in due course and form can show such proper enjoyment of good living, of a generous diet with sound wines and a comfortable bed as will give ground for apprehension to no one having him for guest that pains have been wasted upon one without capacity or appreciation, even though he may not be moved to say as much. But he is not begrudged, I am sure.

It was on Christmas Day—a feast which the Baldwins do always honor and fear no popery—that the fever left poor John so wrecked and weak, and with such faint and uncertain breathing that for hours we feared and prayed. But at last the crisis passed and the life he so freely offered for others will remain, please God, to bless and brighten a world into which, for sure, it was not sent for nothing.

Praise the Lord, O, my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

E. BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER X

### HE CARETH FOR ROBERT CROMWELL IN A SMALL-POX

30th June, 1639.

I WAS sick of a fever and recovering therefrom a matter of two months or more, when, the malady seeming stubbornly loath to leave me, or rather the effects thereof, in that my strength came back to me most provoking slow, the physician advised a change of air; and my father be-thought him that I should go to the Felsted School, in Essex; he thinking well of that school because Mr. Cromwell had chosen it for the training place of his son, Robert, who was much of my own age and a fine youth. I could see little advantage in my leaving the Mere where I have always content, and where my mother and my sister Betty were ever at hand to care for me; nor was I overly pleased at the thought of going to school. But my father is not a man to be long argued with, and few can maintain boldness to openly withstand the reasons he doth summon to the support of his judgment once he hath concluded his mind on a thing; and I frequently find it well to let him have his way even in a matter in which I am concerned, yielding not so much because I do see that he is right and I have been wrong, but to keep peace in the family, as the saying goes.

My education had so far been confided to tutors, who have taught me about all that a man may need to know, so far as I can see, and I am not a blind man by any means; but father thought a certain polish, which I hold unnecessary, might be added to my attainments; and so to school I went to begin at the Spring term.

And if it be of importance to my descendants to know what opinion I hold of the value of schools, as it may well



be, I here set it down as being that the game doth not pay for the candle; and when I have sons they shall be educated at home, as I have been. Nor do I omit the consideration of the point that in the companionship of the youths to be found at school there is much pleasure to be had; and there were many at Felsted to whom my soul clave; but there is that in the servile submission to teachers and masters (few of them of my own station in life), which is required at the schools, which likes me not, and which I do plainly see, can be of no advantage in the forming of character of the true manly kind. The hours and restrictions are irksome and galling, and what with this that and the other, I was for the greater part of the time in pretty steady disfavor with those in authority; and indeed it was Mr. Cromwell's great sorrow and misfortune which saved me doubtless from expulsion, and what is there termed disgrace, though I care not a rush for it.

Young Robert Cromwell and I journeyed to the school in company, and naturally builded a friendship upon our former slight acquaintance since we were from the same country-side, having differences of make-up which did fit well into each other, and were strangers together in a strange place; and we were desirous of being much more intimately associated in our daily life and conversation than was found to be possible under the rules as established for the school and the regulation of the lives and privileges of the scholars. Still, we did see much of each other and such companionship as we were permitted was greatly enjoyed by both of us, so long as it lasted.

But sometime after the twentieth of May (which day I did remember and properly commemorate as being the fifteenth birthday of Mistress Eleanor Hedges), Robert was missed by me from our accustomed haunts and the classrooms. I thought little of it for several days; and then learning upon inquiry that he was sick and had been removed to a solitary cottage in the outskirts, I asked leave to go thither to see how he might be and to find whether I could be of use to him. To my request the Head Master



gave me a flat, and to my way of thinking, an unseemly blunt and harsh refusal; and when I demanded to be made acquainted with the reason why, the learned valet sought to rebuff me the which I speedily gave him to know I would not abide. At last he told me plumply that poor Robert was down with the small-pox and none of the fellowship of the school was to be allowed to go to him or near him for fear that the contagion might spread. I then inquired what provision had been made for the care of him and his comfort in his parlous state, and was told that the physician had engaged an old woman to watch over him and nurse him till he should die; for, saith the Master, "the case is a most malignant one, from the which it is impossible that he shall recover."

"Hath word been sent to his family?" I asked.

"Nay; of what use? his grandfather, Sir James, hath gone from Felsted to London, and as to his parents why trouble them? they would only grieve and worry; and since he is to die whether or no, it is deemed best that they shall not be communicated with till all is over and done; then will there be one sharp pang and so an end. Why prolong and dwell upon that which is grievous but which may not be helped?"

Now while there seemed to me some reason and judgment in this, notwithstanding it had a rude and unfeeling sound and a cruel, yet there rose before my mind the picture of the poor boy away from all beloved ones, lying upon a bed of tormenting and deathly pain, with no one to say a friendly word to him before he died; and the pity of it smote me to the heart; nor could I endure the thought that it should be permitted; and so I told the Head Master that I should go to him.

"If you do, Master Baldwin," he replied, "you will never come back to Felsted. For I plainly warn you that, never having yourself had the disease you will almost infallibly be seized and die of it; but if you do not die you shall never return here; first, because you may bring hither the infection; second, because, having been positively for-



bidden to go as I do now forbid you, to accept you here again after you shall have defiantly disobeyed my order would be to set a bad example and thus encourage others to evil ways."

"Nevertheless I will go."

"Nay, it shall not be permitted. Although thou art by no means an honor to the school by reason of thy headstrong frowardness, yet, as in duty bound to those who placed you here, here you will be kept."

"And how will you keep me?"

"By force if necessary."

Indeed he said it! And the foolish threat and the pompous air with which it was fulminated did so tickle my risibles that notwithstanding my deep concern for poor Robert Cromwell I came near to laughing outright. But I refrained.

"Look you, Master Head Master," said I, "to the place where Robert Cromwell lieth sick unto death as you say, and, as I have no doubt lacking proper nursing and tendance, thither will I go forthwith, and there will I remain till he do be recovered or dead. Is he a dog that he should be thus put away to die? 'Tis a monstrous cruelty no matter what his illness may be. You say I may die—that shall be as God wills; but an if I do die, it shall not be with the load on my conscience that I left my friend or indeed knowingly any one of God's creatures, to perish like a rat in a trap without even so much as raising my hand to help him. I beg that you will clearly understand that I am going and that it will be a most pleasing gratification to me to have you attempt to restrain me by force—for I assure you that force will be necessary. As to my coming back to Felsted I would advise you and all others here who think as you do, to pray most earnestly and fervently that I may never do so. For if I return you will regret that ever you were born I do assure you on the word of a Christian. And so I bid Your Worship a fair good day."

And turning upon my heel I left him, going to my cham-



ber and taking such things as I thought I should need or that might be of use to Robert. I proceeded in this matter with some deliberateness notwithstanding I was eager to be with the sick boy, in the hope that an effort would be made to summon a posse to stay me, the which to encounter I felt would be a rare joy for me.

But none came to check me and as I passed out some of the fellows who had heard of my errand gathered in the way and most foolishly cheered me with shouts of approval; whom I did chide gently, and, telling them to pray for poor Robert Cromwell, bade them farewell; and so fared on to the place where I was told he lay.

The thing which the Head Master had called a cottage I found to be but a mere hut and a poor rickety thing at that. It was in a spot remote from any human habitation and set back in the edge of a wood, a full half mile from the King's highway. It comprised but one room, with a shabby structure attached, falsely counting for another; but in neither would it have been thought humane at the Mere to house swine; and the furnishings were of a sort to suit the house. The nurse was a toothless, cackling old crone, who plainly had but little pleasure and no interest in life and she scarce deigned to answer my explanation of my coming or my questions as to what the physician's instructions might be.

On the bed, if I may so call the wretched heap of rags upon which he lay on the floor was stretched an object which scarce showed a likeness to my school fellow, so sadly repellent that I forbear describing it. He was by times in a stupor, by times aroused, but ever unknowing of my presence. There was little I could do, but what was possible that I did, for the five days that I was there; at the end of which he died, making no sign. I got word to the school and men were sent to bury him, the vicar of the parish giving his poor body a place in the churchyard, where they laid him away on the 31st of last month.

Sending to the school for my belongings, all save my books the which I hope never again to see, I journeyed



back to the Mere, where I was received joyfully by my mother and my sister Betty, and cautiously by my father, who finally said, when I had told him my story, that I looked improved in health and doubtless the change had done me no harm.

J. B.



## CHAPTER XI

### HE RECEIVETH INSTRUCTION FROM OLIVER CROMWELL

10th September, 1639.

Two important discourses have I had with most godly men within the past week, videlicet: Mr. Oliver Cromwell, of Ely, and the Rev. Mr. Balsley, that consecrated leader in the pressing work of preserving God's Israel from the snares and deceits of the Great Enemy of Souls. From them I have gained much information of great value; being thereby led to see the true import of things that have happened, the news of which I have from time to time been apprised but without receiving its true significance. And I am grateful to God that He hath in His wisdom given me to be the associate, if it be but infrequently and casually, of such zealous watchmen on the towers of our Zion.

It cannot be that the Lord God of Hosts, Whom we serve, shall leave us defenseless to our enemies, and that He will permit the deep designs of Rome against the liberties of the people of this realm to come to evil fruition by which we shall be bound hand and foot and be delivered into the hand of the Prince of Darkness. And yet the King hath a wife who is a papist and who hath her papistical priests to mumble mass and practice their devilish rites even in the palace of a Christian King. Nay, more, it is said that Charles himself hath, because of his love for this Delilah, bound himself to Rome and hath delivered over to the enemies of the true religion the education of his own children including the future sovereign of Protestant England.

Nor do we have that defense and protection at the hands of those set for our guidance and preservation in spiritual



things that we ought to have; for they, too, have grown perverted and unregenerate and with the great Archbishop Laud have all gone astray and become the emissaries of the Evil One and are boldly preaching false doctrines and practising vain superstitions in the very bosom of the church which was aforetime established and ordained to the uprooting of error and the planting and showing forth of the free truth of that glorious Gospel of Christ whereby we must be saved. Truly it behooves that all good men and true shall stand ready to go forth at the sound of the trumpet to overturn these wicked men and destroy and make of no effect their evil devices.

Then, too, in things temporal hath King Charles been carrying on a warfare against the liberties of the people of this commonwealth; yea, and with a high hand and a stretched-out arm. The death of the wicked Duke of Buckingham hath been no warning to the King nor hath he showed any less but rather more zeal to fasten the yoke of a domination upon the people for which there shall be no responsibility to any on earth on the part of King or creature of the King. That men shall be haled forth from their peaceful homes and confined in loathsome gaols upon secret or no charges, and without due process of law as provided in both Magna Charta and the Petition of Right and repeated and confirmed unto this people by more than thirty ratifications by royal rulers; that taxes may be imposed at royal will and pleasure and without the consent thereto of a Parliament representing the people; that all shall be done that evil counsel may devise to magnify and enlarge the ruler and his parasites and to crush and break down and oppress the ruled who are and by the grace of God shall be a free people—all this is intolerable; and it is seen of both these godly men that the time is coming when (and, if the remedy be not speedily forthcoming, it will be soon) the manhood of England must gird on the sword shield and buckler, and go out to the conquest of our privilege to govern ourselves and the freedom to think and act as our consciences may dictate.



To Mr. Cromwell I gave my pledge that he would always find me ready and willing to follow him in this holy war; and my bitch Rosalind having brought forth a litter of fine pups, I shall, as I promised a year ago, send him the best of the lot to his home in Ely; for which he thanked me. And so we parted.



## CHAPTER XII

### HE MEETETH GENTLEMEN FROM LONDON

23rd September—THE MERE.

BEING in Huntington this day and at the Red Heifer to dine, I met there Squire Walsingham of Grassmere (and it is noteworthy, to my thinking, that I seldom meet him anywhere else but in that haunt of roystering fellows; but he is of the right kidney and most wholesomely bitter against all papists), and with him one or two young sparks who by their looks spend most of their time about tap-rooms and gaming-tables, whom he brought down with him from London. They were mighty civil and monstrous polite to me, the which engendered in me a thought of suspicion as to what they would have of me, and this was not lessened when I heard the Squire say to them in an undertone as I turned to speak to other of my acquaintances—

“Ay, that is the lad. Can you better him in London?”

“He is even more than I thought from your inventory, Squire,” replied one. And then he added with an oath, “He is most prodigious.”

I wheeled to front them squarely at that, for I like not to have men talk of me to my very face behind my back, when the Squire engaged me at once in discourse of a new breed of dogs of Danish derivation, one of which, he said, belonging to one of his companions, was even then tied up in the stable.

“After you have finished, John,” he cried, “we will go and have a look at him. He is big as a calf and the boast is made that these Danish dogs can whip anything we have in England.”



"I do assure you," chimed in one of the newcomers, "he is a monstrous fine fellow."

"Of that I have no doubt," I replied, "and I congratulate his owner, but I have small faith or fear that any good well-bred and judiciously trained Fens dog can or ever will be whipped in a fair bout by anything born outside of King Charles's realm."

At which the two city men promptly raised their tankards, a challenge which the Squire and I quickly accepted.

"To His Majesty's health!" they cried in chorus.

"And the mending of his ways," added I.

"Aye," saith the Squire, "and confusion to all popish intermeddlers and parasites," and they all looked mightily pleased with themselves and their company. And so, till dinner was done, we held pleasant converse and drank fully as much as could with easy liberality be said to be good for us.

The meal ended we went forth to the stables, and truly the Dane is a huge dog and a handsome. His owner recited his pedigree with much glibness and praised his prowess to the skies, to all of which, as in proper politeness I was bound I made no adverse reply. But I'll lay a pretty wager my new bull will chew him up an he hath the opportunity.

Thence returning to the tap-room and calling for more drink even though we had already had enough, we warmed up and became prodigious friendly.

"Master Baldwin," at last quoth he who is called Sir Roger Birney, "craving your pardon for the liberty I take, may I ask your weight?"

"I ride at a little more than fourteen stone—I have been gaining during the past six months, and may say now, have quite enough for present purposes."

"And your height?"

"Six foot four, Sir Roger, having gained more than an inch since this time a year."

"'Fore Gad. He would not find Bully Benjamin more than a mouthful." cried Sir Richard.



"Nay, I'm not so sure," said Sir Roger, cautiously. "He is a stone or two under the bully, if he have the same height."

"But he hath a most easy and persuasive way with his fists," rejoined the Squire. "It is a treat worth a long day's riding over a bad road to see him handle them."

"And so hath the Bully," observed Sir Roger, "and so hath the Bully. He hath laid by the heels all the best men we have in London, and the King himself hath honored him with his praises."

Seeing my look of bewilderment (for I had never before heard of Bully Ben), the Squire explained that he was a Yorkshireman, at present the rage among dandies, a smith by trade and a boxer by practice.

"It is only what you might expect of His Majesty," said Sir Richard, "that he should have a weak spot for the Yorkshireman since the Bully is a rabid papist and is said to be on terms of close intimacy with even Laud himself."

"Do you mean to say that the Archbishop holds himself so low that he doth associate with a professional bruiser?" I asked, with some heat.

"Faith, Master Baldwin, you're a bit behind the times. 'Tis the fashion now in London. The fine gentleman who hath not the honor of acquaintance with the Bully is not in the best vogue. And an Archbishop must stand well with the leaders of all sorts—besides who knows how soon Laud may have use for him?"

"He is a good man of his inches," suddenly broke in the Squire, "but I'll lay an hundred golden guineas that John Baldwin here can whip him."

Now what may this portend?



## CHAPTER XIII

### HIS LONDON FRIENDS VISIT THE MERE

11th September.

JUST before the dinner hour this day who should come riding up to our door but Squire Walsingham in his best bib and tucker, and accompanied by his two friends that I met with him at the Heifer yesterday, videlicet: Sir Roger Birney and Sir Richard Hatton; and three braver looking men it would be troublesome to find in a day's journey. I could but note the vast gain to-day over their seeming of yesterday at the Inn. It was not so much that they were carefully dressed in the most modish apparel made of the best approved stuffs and material but they were freshly shaven, newly curled and brushed, and, what struck me most sensibly, they wore an air of grave and responsible men greatly at variance with their aspect of yesterday.

My father received them with that formal and yet delightful courtesy by which he at once denotes the dignity of his own character and at the same time puts his visitor at perfect ease. Alas, that I may never hope to reach that excellence of manner which my father hath—it is with Will, indeed (if only not so majestic and yet winning), who hath never striven for it; but although I have ever longed for it and have sought to copy it yet hath it never come to me.

“I trust I am not unwelcome, Sir William,” began the Squire, with much more of real deference in his manner than ever I saw him show to any one before, “in making bold to come thus unannounced and to bring with me two gentlemen of London to whom I could not deny myself the honor of a presentation to the finest country-gentleman in all England.”

I saw a sharp glance of mingled suspicion and haughty



surprise shoot from my father's eyes at this salutation, but it faded quickly before the honest meaning which he seemed to read in the Squire's face.

"Why, then, I am sure you could not doubt your welcome, Squire Walsingham; nor that any gentlemen come hither upon your accredit would be also most heartily received. You do my poor house honor, gentlemen, and I must beg the pleasure and profit of your company for so long as your affairs will permit of your stay at the Mere."

They were duly presented to my mother and my sister Betty, to whom they were most gallant—the two strangers, I mean, for Squire Walsingham is an ancient friend and a man of near my father's years while the two are young; it may be a score or half-score years older than am I, surely not more. That they were hard smitten by my sister Betty's appearance, and particularly Sir Richard Hatton, was plain to be seen. And small wonder that it should be so; for my sister Betty is of the fairest among women.

Along with her great size of frame (she is not gross of flesh) she hath a grand stateliness of deportment which is much like what I opine must belong to a queen although I have never seen one; nor is there any one I know who is lighter of foot or more graceful in her every action than Betty; her hair is a soft, dark brown, neither golden nor curly as is Nell's; and her eyes, also brown, have that clear depth and steadfast quietness (save when she doth jest and then they are wondrous merry), which certifies that here is a strong, pure soul, who thinketh no evil and whose love or friendship will abide unto death enduring trials and the temptations of doubt with calm assurance and unwavering loyalty; her skin hath the mingled pink of the peach-bloom and the creamy white of new drawn milk. She received the compliments of the young dandies with the air of one to whom all gallant homage is her undoubted birthright but who could also quite easily sort and separate that which is mere dross from that which is



pure gold. Truly, she is a wonderful girl, my sister Betty; nor do I believe all the courts in Christendom contains her fellow.

The dinner over and the wine brought on, the women gone and all country-side affairs disposed of——

“And now, gentlemen,” asked my father, “you being fresh from London and knowing to all that is going on, what news can you give us of the Court and the King and the outlook for the future?”

“Why, as to that, Sir William,” replied Sir Richard, “to say the truth and in sober verity things do not look well. There be few of those, if any, of the well-informed who are not filled with most foreboding fears for the future of this unhappy realm.”

“And yet,” broke in Sir Roger, “we have had a matter of ten years or so of most tranquil and prosperous times under good King Charles. I cannot conceive of any cause for fears. It is true that we have had troubles over the prerogatives of the King and the privileges of the Parliament, but hath it not been ever so, and will not these things right themselves and come to agreeable adjustment in the course of time as they ever have done? How think you, Sir William?”

I gazed at the man with amazement. Here was one fresh from the Court, from London that great city where the rulers and the learned and wise men are all congregated and he talking like a very dunce whom any school-boy might instruct in that history of his country with which every gentleman ought to be advised. What ignorance was this of the constant struggle that hath endured for the past twenty years between the King on the one hand and the Commons on the other whereby the one doth seek to enslave the people and the other to fight for the rights which God doth mean they shall have; and further, of the conflict which hath ever been with us between the adherents of the true religion and the devilish emissaries of the hellish Pope of Rome.

To sit and prate of tranquil times when men have been



thrown into prison, aye, and even mulcted of their lives with no other warrant of right than the mere despotic order of the King or the edict of his odious Star Chamber; when men have been robbed of their substance by unjust levy under color of taxation which hath no authority save the will of him whom God hath put upon the throne to bless and benefit and not to harry and despoil the people of this realm; when the infamous Laud and his creatures, acting by color of consecration as prelate and presbyters of the Protestant religion have persecuted the Saints and done the dirty work of popery with a cruelty and ferocity which have profaned and brought into contumelious disgrace the name of the blessed Christ, whose ministers they falsely pretend to be. Hath he not heard of the Buckingham, the Straffords and the Father Sancy's, who have polluted the sweet air of fair England with the foul vapors of the wicked devisings of their corrupt minds? My gorge was rising but my father's eye restrained me and checked the words that surged to my lips.

"Nay," said he, courteously, "I am to learn from you, who have the better knowledge. Pray remember that I am but a country gentleman, absorbed, for the most part of the time, with the pursuits of a home-keeping man; and of whom it surely were becoming that I should hold my tongue and defer my judgment till such further and complete showing of the facts shall justify a making up of the mind."

"You do take but a superficial view of things, Sir Roger," said Sir Richard, "if you have not seen in all these years of apparent tranquility and prosperity a most uneasy and rebellious feeling beneath the surface, caused by the usurpations and oppressions of King Charles and his creatures and the papistical plans and plottings of these foreign priests with whom the Queen doth ever surround herself. It is more than such a people as the English can bear, and it will not be borne."

My heart warmed to him, and I rose from my seat and gripped his hand till he winced.



"You speak boldly, Sir Richard."

"No more boldly, I do assure you, Sir William, than I have spoken beneath the shadow of Whitehall itself. London, aye, and all the Court, too, doth know Dick Hatton's mind upon these things, and ever shall know them while he hath lungs to give them breath."

"Why, then," cried my stout, old father; "it doth start the blood in my veins to hear such brave and proper proclamation. So far as my information goes you have every license for what you say, and my soul approves your purpose and action."

And then he rose, mighty stately and imposing, and taking Sir Richard's hand shook it most warmly; but he did not make him wince as did I.

And from that on the talk became more and more serious and so stirred up my blood that I longed for the sound of the trumpet which should call me forth to do battle for the Right. My father was not so ill-informed neither, as one might have thought, hearing him when he sought to draw from his visitors all they knew; for Mr. Cromwell hath kept him pretty fully advised and hath spent much time closeted with him here at the Mere counseling with him I have no doubt, upon the best course that shall be pursued by God's people in the great emergency that seems even now impending.

Supper-time came upon us before we were aware of it and with it, to my surprise, came Sir Charles and Sir Geoffrey, the Lady Priscilla and the Lady Helen, to grace our table and make the Mere brighter than it hath at any time been since the day when the poor lads were drowned; my mother having sent to apprise them of the presence of our guests and to beg their company to supper and the evening.

I would have liked it better if Sir Charles had brought Nell along, too; but Lady Priscilla said she was o'er young yet for such weighty entertainment (at which I do believe she laughed in her sleeve), but that Mistress Eleanor had made her the bearer of her love and duty to one whom



she was pleased to dub Sir John Longshanks, and she hoped he was well and had not yet broken his neck over his own great feet. To which I replied that if it was me that Mistress Eleanor meant, I would be infinitely obliged if she would say to her that I was prodigious thankful to learn that she had not forgotten me, although in all good truth I was sorry she could recall nothing but my awkward bigness and my drawbacks, and that I was mightily pleased to know that she was still in such lively health as to have spirit for such merry jesting. At this Lady Priscilla who hath ever been most kind to me, which I have little deserved for once I did steal her quinces which she had most jealously watched till they had ripened for fitness for jelly and preserving (the which I ate, and rolled with pain all the night long), Lady Priscilla took my hand and looking into my eyes with her own (which are so much like Nell's, only older), said—

“’Twas but her jest, John; and you must know that sometimes we foolish women say the cruelest things with our lips when our hearts are tenderest and most loving towards those we so wantonly scourge. And be sure there is no one at Hedge Hall, nay, I dare say, in all the Fen country who does not love John Baldwin, and love him most when we twit him of his hugeness. We do call him ‘Big John’ because we love him. For where in all England is so brave and unselfish a knight as he, who hath not spared at any time to peril his life as if it were nought to him if he might lay it down for others——”

But I could endure no more of this. I felt myself hot and my face going red, and my breathing sorely disturbed; and the hand she held I felt was growing icy and trembling; and so, saying that she must pardon me but that I heard my mother calling me and I would now have to leave her, I fled, while she laughed and cried out after me that the man who could not look himself in the face when a friend held the glass was a monstrous craven. I fled, I say, to the kitchen, where Margery, the cook, forthwith produced a pie of chicken livers, which hath ever been my favorite



dish and made me eat it, even though I was then well stuffed with a hearty supper. And as the good creature said she had made it for me, and is ever thus thinking of me who never showed her any favor but a boy's rough teasing, I did eat it, every mouthful; and good it was, too.

When bed-time came and we took our candles our neighbors having said good-night and gone, the Squire and the two knights would have me come to them in the guest chambers where they were lodged, the doors of the which stood open between the rooms, but those opening into the hall being closed. And here they gave me much lively news of the doings of the men of fashion in London, where they have such cock-fighting and other rare diversions as I would like above all things to see; and to the furthering of my desire they promised to ask my father to give me leave to accompany them as their guest, on their return.

And so talking of this and that at last they began to speak again of the famous boxer whom they call Bully Ben. They told how he had come to town unknown and friendless, but had in a marvelous short time bested all the town bullies one after the other, the fighting being done at a large assembly room, to obtain admission to which the nobility and gentry, aye, even royalty itself, had paid large fees; that Bully Ben had thus acquired quite a fortune but was now pining with a great grief because there was no man willing to go against him for love or money; that a purse had been raised (to which the King himself had paid a great sum) amounting to £1,000—a most prodigious lot of money!—which was offered for a prize to the man who should whip Bully Ben at a public meeting in the said assembly room before mentioned. In all this talk the three did seem greatly and deeply interested and even, as I now see, excited, as was also I, till finally Sir Roger cried—

“The truth is, Master Baldwin, we are persuaded that you are the man who can whip Bully Ben. Aye, and we have laid a wager of £100 apiece that we can produce the man hoping that you would meet our wishes. Will you



do it? Remember that if you do you gain the thousand pounds."

At once I went cold, as if I had been dipped in icy water. I looked at them for a moment and then said—

"I am sorry, gentlemen, that you have made this proposal to me while you are my father's guests. Do you take care never to repeat it to me when his roof doth not shelter you."

And so I left them and came here to my own chamber.



## CHAPTER XIV

### HE WILL NOT VISIT LONDON

12th September, 1639.

RISING early this morning (for my thoughts were not pleasant and I could not sleep), I got out my fowling-piece and whistling for my dogs made for the grain stubble; thinking that in the bagging of a few birds I might divert my mind from that which I fain would forget. But just as I rounded the Mere End and had been assured by Ned Taber that I would find them a-plenty, I heard a rustling in the hedge and pausing, Sir Richard Hatton, vaulting over with surprising ease and agility came toward me with extended hand and an expression so engaging in its mixture of apology shame-facedness and good fellowship that before I knew it I had taken it; and at the same time begrudged that I had done so.

“Master Baldwin,” said he, with a most proper and becoming deference in his manner, “I have come out thus early with the hope that I might find you to bring you the apologies of all, the Squire, Sir Roger and myself, for what happened last night. It was a most grievous error which we ought never to have committed, and I take my full share of responsibility for it, and on my honor, I am most heartily sorry for my part in it—and so are we all—and I bear to you a thousand apologies from all and the hope that you will forgive and restore us to that place in your regard which we most justly have deserved to lose.”

Now all this was mighty fine and no more than was my due; but I chose not to rise too quickly to it, like a foolish fish to a deceitful bait hiding a cruel hook.

“Why, look you, Sir Richard, you are my father’s guests and have partaken of his hospitality, having been freely and



heartily received. Having eaten our salt," and here Sir Richard winced visibly as he did when I squeezed his hand yesterday, "you are under the protection of the obligations that govern gentle hospitality for so long as you remain under my father's roof. So let there be an end to the discussion of this matter and I beg your company to the fields for some shooting. Ned shall bring you a fowling-piece."

All this with my best manner, which, while not so grand as that of my father I yet rejoiced to see was having a most salutary effect; for my heart was still hot within me; nor would I have it thought that I was one to be lightly played with.

"You but make me to feel a deeper humiliation, Master John, by that high-mindedness which you discover in your every word and greatly as I deplore the mistake we made, yet still more mightily do I marvel that we were such dolts as to have so blindly misjudged our man. We can only acknowledge that our fault is without excuse of any sort, beg your pardon, and throw ourselves most humbly upon your generosity and Christian charity. I do assure you that speaking for myself, I have had no sleep the whole night long, and my self-reproaches have been most bitter and sincere."

What could a man do? Before he had ended my hand went forth of itself to join his, and, Ned coming with his piece, we journeyed on and soon were popping at the birds, in the killing of which Sir Richard was most dexterous, he counting nine to his score while I had seven, in the two hours sport. And so back for breakfast.

When we were assembled in the breakfast room the Squire and Sir Roger were prodigious polite to me and solicitous for my health, protesting their hope that it was good and being at such pains about it all and to assure me of the extreme elegance of my appearance that they almost overdid it, to the arousing of my father's suspicions, (there are few things that escape his eyes) for I saw him shoot a keen look at them and me. But I gave them the



hint by affecting an equal amount if not more of ceremonious cordiality, and we sat down to our meal after a blessing had been most awkwardly stumbled through by the Squire who had been honored by my father's request that he should ask it. And it was mighty well that my father did not suspect anything. I dare not think what might have happened if he had but known the truth; for while my father hath the highest notions of honor and the duty of true hospitality, and is a wise and just man beyond any other in this realm, yet is he a quick and sensitive man, and a choleric.

To my surprise our guests returned to the subject of my projected visit to London with them, the which my father had the evening before consented to. But it was much more, plainly, to my father's surprise that, opportunely, I took occasion to say that I felt my journey to London had best be postponed for the present—and this no less to the chagrin of my would-be hosts, especially Sir Roger for whom of the three I have the least regard, but who seemed bent on having my company willy-nilly. And indeed, I had much difficulty in making appear reasonable and a matter for no suspicion to my father, my sudden change of inclination in the matter. For I am not nimble, I fear, in my intellectuals; which is doubtless well known to my father (who knoweth everything, I verily believe,) and only last night I was full of joy at the prospect of seeing London so shortly.

But my mother, perceiving I think, that I had some good reason for so suddenly changing my mind and that it was one which I did not wish to expose, came to my rescue by pointing out that my wardrobe was sadly in need of replenishing in the particular of those things which are of home supply, and asserting that several weeks would be required in which to fit me out properly. This there was no answer to, nor could any be suggested; and sure the Lady Nancy Baldwin is not only the best, but the brightest, quickest-witted and dearest mother that ever a great hulking, clod-hopping ne'er-do-weel had; and I see



in this an instance of God's providence, which doth supply here what He hath shortened there, thus maintaining an equality, or average; for the which I am humbly grateful.

In the afternoon our guests paid their respects at Hedge Hall and the Abbey, my father riding with them and bringing home Sir Charles and Sir Geoffrey to again help entertain them. Before they went Sir Roger bought my bull bitch, Cobwebs, which I fetched with me out of Essex; paying me a long price for I did not really care to sell her. He doth propose to breed her to his Danish dog and hath promised to sell me one of the pups on my own terms, if I care to buy after sight.

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER XV

### HE REASONETH ON LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, WITH THE MISTRESS ELEANOR

BALDWINSMERE, 29th November, 1639.

THE Rev. Elijah Balsley hath again been with us for two days and we have had a gracious season of awakening and searching of conscience and an arousing to the imminent necessity of the girding on of our armor to the great day of the coming of the Lord's vengeance upon his enemies; for the which we owe him, under the God whose minister he is, most unfeigned thanks. He came on the morning of the 27th of this present month, from Ely, where he had been for the better part of the week taking counsel with Mr. Cromwell and building up the weak places in the walls of Zion in that neighborhood.

The Rev. Mr. Balsley, albeit of the Independent sect and not an ordained minister of the Establishment, is not only a most godly man and full of ever burning zeal, but also hath a wonderful power upon all who do hear him; and I here confess his power, which is most certainly of God; for he hath made me see the wickedness of the perverted Episcopalianism of this latter-day (which is being shamefully used as a cloak to hide those who seek to bind our consciences and hand us over to the power of the Pope of Rome) even more clearly than did ever Mr. Cromwell himself; who, though he be zealous, yet lacketh the eloquence and facility which doth make of Mr. Balsley an untiring sounder of solemn warnings.

Now, I have ever had a fondness for the old church in the which I have been reared, and of which I am a member; and not the least of my sorrow at the promise



of present conditions is because of the inevitable passing away and destruction of the dear old liturgy to be supplanted by the bare and bald forms used by Mr. Balsley and his kind. But he hath shown me how that liturgy can be and is used to pervert men to popery; and for sure I have no patience with the genuflections and the gorgeous vestments, the candles and the whining intonings and such like mummeries and mockeries, the which I have never seen, but which I am assured have been introduced into the ancient service by Laud, in cunning furtherance of his monstrous subverting of the true religion; and I will not hold with them.

My father, too, who is not a man to be deceived in such matters (nor in anything) hath taken a firm stand and is minded and fixed in his purpose that if we cannot hold fast to that which is good in the Establishment without accepting with it this which is so damnable he will go utterly out and away and seek to serve his God according to the teachings of Calvin and Knox; and in this I go with him. For we do know that Rome is minded not alone to fetter our consciences but to take away our liberties as Englishmen as well; and if we fight to secure the freedom to serve God in the way in which our consciences do require and dictate and to bring others into submission to such rule of faith and godly doctrine and to preserve our English liberties, do we not well? Yea, verily do we.

In the afternoon of the 27th, Mr. Balsley preached a three hours' discourse in the great hall from the text Psalms VII., the ninth verse: "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end: but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the heart and the reins." Outdoor work being slack the laborers were brought in, a few of the contumacious being made to understand that they must yield their sinful scruples and serve God in the way that we have elected as right and just; for my father is determined and set that as for himself and his house they shall serve the Lord; and I would like to see any of those who



belong to Baldwinsmere attempt to disobey him in this great matter.

I need not go largely into a synopsis of Mr. Balsley's discourse, which was chiefly to point out the errors and wicked designs of the Episcopalians and to show the dangers threatening from their evil conspiracies; with an inquiry as to whether we, as belonging to the remnant of God's Israel, are alive to our duty in this solemn hour.

On the 28th again, in the afternoon (this time Sir Charles and his family and Sir Geoffrey and they of the Abbey being invited by my father), Mr. Balsley presented a second discourse, founded upon the twentieth verse of the eleventh chapter of Jeremiah: "But, O Lord of Hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see Thy vengeance on them"; and truly I thought of how providentially the present emergency had been foreseen, so that the Bible holds little but that which urgeth the children of God to rise up and destroy those who cannot or will not see, as we so clearly do, the only true way to serve Him and build up His Kingdom upon earth; that it must be by those only who are free to use the leadings and teachings of their own consciences; and that those who do not bring their consciences into conformity with this blessed law of liberty shall be dealt with as perverse, unregenerate, hard of heart, of stiff necks, and without the pale of God's mercy.

This thought I did show to Mistress Eleanor Hedges, when, after the preaching was over we strayed out for the air through the park. She had been made thoughtful, I could see, as I had been, by Mr. Balsley's sermon; but it seemed that her thoughts had a different trend from mine.

"Indeed, John," she replied, "you are mistaken, and so are many I fear, in these days, in the thought that the Bible teaches only the practice of cruel and bloody compulsion towards those who do not agree with us. They too, have consciences, and if their consciences lead them to a different view from ours how may we justify ourselves



when we insist, aye, even to the dreadful resort to sword and fagot, that they must accept the leadings of our consciences rather than of their own? Answer me that in all honesty, John."

"Why, then, I will, my old playfellow, in all honesty and with such convincing power that you shall at once see into what error a tender heart is betraying you. It is because our consciences are right, dear Nell, and theirs are wrong. It is as plain as a pike-staff."

"But who saith this—who judgeth between them and us on this matter?"

"We do. Who else? Having the assurance ourselves of the infallible correctness of our own views, knowing that we see aright and that there can be no other just view (for every question hath but two sides, a right and a wrong) who shall better decide than we?"

"But, and if they think they are right and we are wrong and think it just as strongly as we do—should they not be allowed that same freedom of conscience which we require for ourselves?"

"By no means."

"Why?"

"Because they do not see clearly, and aright, and we do."

"Thou art like a cunning fox, John, who doubles and goeth in at the same hole he came out of, and thus outwits the dogs. But some day, I fear, a wise old dog will remain to watch while the rest of the silly fellows go yelping off on a wild goose chase; and that wise old dog will then have you. But we will talk no longer of these deep things which are too great for many who, to their own hurt, seize upon them as a child might seek to wield a razor. Tell me of your dogs, your horses, and—yourself."

There hath come a change to Nell. Her gown is now worn longer than it was a few years ago, for one thing; and either that hath the effect to make her seem taller, or else she hath grown; for she doth not seem so like the little girl she was but yesterday. She hath been away



to London for a fortnight's stay with her father's cousin, who is one of the Queen's ladies, and is returned but recently; but that cannot account for the change I find in her. There is a more dignified look, a sweeter gravity in her eyes, which can still twinkle mischievously as I found when I asked her if she had met young Lord Lovering at the Court. She said that he had paid his respects to her more than once, and was vastly improved since he was here at Hedge Hall. Then she added, most demurely, that he wished to be commended to My Worship with most affectionate remembrances.

Far be it from me to set myself up to judge of the wisdom of the Being Who created all things; and all who know me will bear me witness that I am not one to thus rashly and impiously offend. And yet there can be no reasonable doubt, and there existeth none in my mind, that if I had the making of some things I could better apply materials and more economically and more usefully.

Take this same Lord Lovering to illustrate my meaning. There are certain bones (though doubtless soft), muscles (indubitably flabby), tissues (degenerate), a skull and a substance therein in lieu of a brain, the whole weighing altogether say an hundred and five and twenty pounds, or say nine stone. In their present combination they make—what? A something which looketh like and is yet not a man and having no fitness for the doing of a man's work. It goeth up and down the earth and to and fro therein using up every day so much of God's good air and light, so much food and drink, and doing nothing to justify its creation. The stuff that is in it would have made a fairly good calf; or a few puppies—but no, puppies are meant to grow to dogs, and a good dog is as much better than It, as may easily be conceived.

But, as Nell hath said, there are some things too deep to be handled by plain, simple folk; and as I care not to cut my fingers I'll e'en drop this razor.

When I lifted Nell into her saddle this evening and her



hand rested for an instant in mine the same thrill which I have noted before, only far worse, shot through my frame. It was not unpleasant and yet I think it must be because my system is disordered. I'll go to my mother for a catholicon from her physic case.



## CHAPTER XVI

### HE IS TROUBLED CONCERNING A WAGER

3rd December.

TOM came over to-day to bring the £10 and the sword for which I agreed to compound the debt he owed me, videlicet: his horse Prince David, for winning the race more than a year ago. I was mightily cheered at the sight of him, for we have met but seldom during the past year—but not because of the money, which I had clean forgot. And he seemed no less pleased to see me.

“John,” he said, “you have doubtless long ago forgot that I owe you a large sum of money”—as indeed I had.

“Money, Tom? I do not remember any such thing.”

“I thought you had forgot. Well, it was this way,” and then he went on into so shrewd and cunning a story of the race that he got me all a-quiver and I ran it over again even down to feeling the hot blast of the horse’s breath on my neck at the finish. It was a grand race. And he seemed as proud that I had won as I was pleased at the same.

“There’s the £10,” he said; “it took me a long time to get it together for if I had asked father he might have told Sir William and then he would have forbade your taking it as he did in the case of the horse. But I got it together at last and there it is——” throwing a purse in my lap. “And here is the sword.”

“Tom! Tom!” I cried, staying his unfastening of his belt, “what do you mean? I’ll neither have your money nor your sword. What opinion can you have of me that you should think that I could do this thing?”

“If you do not allow me to pay this debt John Baldwin, you do place me in the guise of a swindler. Is that your opinion of me?”



“Nay, Tom Templeton, you know it is not. Why thou **are** the best and truest friend and comrade ever a man **had**. Have I not beaten thee a dozen times, and would I do that if I did not love thee? But I’ll take neither sword nor money, you foolish boy.”

But he would not listen to reason and at last went his way leaving the gold and the sword, and poor John Baldwin in a mighty perplexity to know what to do in the matter. But I soon reached a conclusion; there is a hunter for sale at Huntingdon, a fine good-boned bay standing about sixteen hands and free from blemish of any kind. He is offered for £15 and Christmas morning will see him and the sword at the Abbey—for they keep Christmas at the Abbey.

Besides Prince David is too fine a horse to be rid after the dogs as Tom doth ride.

J. B.



## CHAPTER XVII

### HE GOETH TO LONDON WITH MR. CROMWELL

THE MERE, 25th May, 1640.

As it is raining, and hath been raining for a week past so that all the earth is soaked and soft and unfit for a man to go upon for any sort of manly pursuit it hath occurred to me to set down in this my journal, certain happenings while I was making a stay in London.

The Parliament having been called to meet by the King Mr. Cromwell was chosen from Cambridge, and upon the eve of his going to London he spent a day and a night here with us at the Mere; being for the most part of the time closeted with my father in deep discussion no doubt, of the affairs of our unhappy country which do seem to be growing ever worse. After supper however, he did sit for a time and engage in general talk with us all. He hath ever showed me since the death of his son Robert, now nearly a year gone, a most gentle courtesy and a loving consideration that hath touched me nearly and hath made me to feel for him such affection as I have for no other man save my father only; and during our converse that evening he did encourage me to speak my mind freely upon the state of affairs as to the stress between the people and the King; and I do suppose that no other topic receives in this day so much attention in the homes of the English people.

To say truth I was nothing loth to give my views (in the which respect my brother Will did not follow, nor lead me neither) for I have been at pains to listen carefully to all who could inform me as to what is going forward and have reflected sufficiently upon what I have thus learned to have formed sound and unanswerable conclusions. At first my father was inclined to check me, for he hath here-



tofore seemed to have a certain lack of judgment as to the value of my opinions but Mr. Cromwell would not have it so.

“Nay, my dear Sir William,” he cried, “let the lad speak. It joys me to know that there are of those who shall come to responsibility and must be charged with our public and private liberties after you and I shall be called away who do even now enter deeply into these great and momentous questions. Let the lad speak his mind I pray thee, for he seems to be able to do so and mayhap he shall give forth wisdom—as it hath been promised in the Holy Scriptures.”

Now there was a twinkle in Mr. Cromwell’s eyes as he said the last words, which I might have thought to be mischievous if he were ever given to any but most weighty and serious discourse; and I know not what scripture he did refer to (my sister Betty whispered in my ear something concerning “babes and sucklings” but Betty is a female and what have women to do with these grave matters which must be dealt with by men?) for I like not to pore over books and I cannot remember all that I hear at public worship. My father yielded most becomingly to Mr. Cromwell’s wish; saying, with a smiling pursing of his lips which is peculiar to him and to my sister Betty too, at times—

“Why then, my loving friend Oliver, His Worship shall speak with all good will if thou dost desire it. For truly, if thou dost seek one who can adjudge and adjust, regulate and set straight the affairs of everybody save only his own and mind most masterfully every man’s business save again, his own, and infallibly advise in all matters, thou hast no need to go further. My son John is not only equal to the task but hath the most unselfish willingness to discharge it; entering usually upon the same with a marvelous zeal and alacrity, and that without hanging back even when his good offices have not been first asked. All that he doth require is some slight knowledge of the difficulty in hand or the problem to be solved, and he assumeth at once



the burden of the responsibility; and such is his prescience and good-heartedness that he doth decide the more quickly in those cases wherein he hath the least information, rather than those where a more abundant knowledge might inconveniently impede him. And as you wish to have his views on public matters I feel warranted in promising that he will give them freely, and that doubtless you shall find them most valuable."

My father can do the handsome thing when he is so minded; and I was not ill-pleased to have him thus publicly avow his opinion of me the which I rejoice to see hath vastly improved; for he hath not heretofore showed that respect for my judgment or that he valued the same as I have ever felt he should do. And so I thanked him most dutifully as I felt was proper, inasmuch as he too had spoken openly before all present. My sister Betty had left the room with such suddenness that at first I feared there was something wrong without, of the which I was not aware, but the others showing no uneasiness I was reassured; my mother quickly bent closer to her sampler-work so that I could not see her face, a habit she hath when she is most interested and desireth to listen closely and get all the good out of what is being said; and Will for some reason I could not stop to consider winked at me most solemnly from where he sat, behind my father's back.

"Why then, let him speak freely," repeated Mr. Cromwell weightily.

The which I proceeded to do; but as to what I said it doth not need to set it out here. Doubtless it was seed sown in good ground and will bring forth fruit abundantly in due season. And I have the more hope that this will be so because that, before we separated for the night, Mr. Cromwell said, looking at me with a most engaging expression the while—

"Sir William, and Lady Nancy, I shall make bold to ask a boon of you; and that is no less than the loan of your son John to go to London with me to witness the opening



of the Parliament. Remember that I go alone, for Mrs. Cromwell is in low health which is a great grief to me, and my son Oliver is at the Felsted School. I will be a lonely man and would fain have one with me who shall seem to help my thoughts more often back to the sweet Fen country where is everything on earth that is dear to me. I know not for how long I shall keep him and I pray thee have me at my own will in this. Remember too, my loving friends, what this lad is to me and hath been since my poor son Robert died in his arms a year ago."

"Then shall he go with thee," said my father while my mother came to my side and stole her arm about me and gazed wistfully into my face; "and may God make him a blessing to thee and a stay and a comfort while thou art wrestling with the Powers of Evil which thou goest forth, as His champion, to meet."

"Amen!" said Mr. Cromwell most softly; and so there was an end of that.

Then followed for the two days that lacked before we should start such bustling and cheerful hum of preparations for my journey as the old Mere had never before witnessed in my time; and I could scarce wait, and my heart beat fast, and curious thrills did chase each other through my flesh whenever I bethought me of the glories that awaited me. Through all the country-side I rode to bid farewell to all my friends; and it was a joyful thing to see that many did not feign to hide that they would miss me.

Mistress Eleanor Hedges affected however, to fear that the papists would make a speedy convert of me and that if the Queen should see me she would fall an easy victim to what she was pleased to call my manly charms; and vowed that she looked to hear no other news of me than that I had been made a peer of the realm and member of the King's Council of State, or appointed by the Pope to be successor to Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury at her (the Queen's) instance and insistence, before I had been in London a week; nor could I get any other sense out of the little witch who never was so mischievous and



froward as that day; though Polly, her maid, afterwards told our Ruth that Nell stayed in her own chamber and spent a whole day in weeping after I had said good-by to her.

Women are strange creatures and hard to understand; for so I have heard my father say, and, truly my experience goeth on all-fours with his in this matter; but there! Nell is no woman but a little girl; but why a little girl should take it upon herself to have the vapors which are by no means becoming, till she is grown older, I cannot find a way to see. But Nell is wilful and hath ever her own habits and practices.

Tom Templeton was sore cast down at the news of my going and I was hard put to it to give him comfort. There were tears in his eyes when he insisted that I should take his dearest treasure, his horse Prince David, with me; urging that I should have a spare horse; for he had heard that in London they do ride much; and protesting that the hunter which I sent him at Christmas and which he hath christened "Big John," was a better than the Prince and would serve all his needs. But I told him that this was folly; as it was; that I ought not to impose an extra horse on Mr. Cromwell; that if I found I needed other than Roger I would send for Prince David; and with that promise he was fain to be content and would not be so without. I gave him special charge of my dogs (under my sister Betty) with particular instructions in the case of each one which I told him he must set down in writing, that he might not have to trust to his memory which is but a rickety, harum-scarum thing. This he promised but whether he did or not I know not. When I came back I found Rosalind with a limp for which he hath not yet accounted, but shall.

My father closeted me for a much briefer time than I looked for and gave me much less advice than I expected; the which was a joy to me in that it showed that he hath at last come to a knowledge of the fact that there is but little in which I stand in need of any one's instructing



and that I may well be left to my own wisdom. He gave me also a much fuller purse than I had thought to have and said that more should be forthcoming if it should be needed, concerning the which he would ask Mr. Cromwell to advise him. In that he liberally provided me I was well pleased; for it showed wise foresight; but that he should trouble Mr. Cromwell to advise him when I should need more and how much did not so strongly commend itself to my approval since I should be the better judge in the matter; and this I explained to him; but he only said he thought he would let it rest as he had arranged; and to this, as tending to the conducing of his peace of mind seeing that he was set upon having his own way, I at last consented.

My mother did so liberally bedew and damp my shirts and other clothes with her tears while she was at the packing of them that I could not bear to stay to oversee the work (as perhaps I should have done since women can know but little of the properest way to pack a man's wardrobe); and I was most agreeably surprised to find when I put them on that they gave me no cold. It was difficult to be at my sister Betty's frame of mind; for though her nose was red and her eyes swollen for the great part of the time she would hold converse with me on no sort of terms at all comporting with either my merits or my self-respect—but I thought she would never leave off her hugging when the hour at last arrived for me to mount and ride to Ely, where I joined Mr. Cromwell.

My father bade me farewell as one imagines a Roman sire would send his son with unbending austerity forth to his honorable death; but his handclasp was warm, and may God bless him for being the man that he is, above and better than any other on earth. Will bade me keep out of gaol, slipping a purse into my hand as he did so—which was kind of the best-affectioned brother in all the world and the knightliest (though he doth ever give me the rough side of his tongue, which hath a sharpness like to that of my father's; but with it ever goeth the soft side, which is



the inside, of his heart) ; and he could well afford it for, as the heir, he receiveth a better allowance than do I.

It was hardest parting with my mother and I cannot bear to set it down here. May God ever bless her, as He must or He is no God of mine. I could not forget her clinging embrace and the yearning tenderness of her farewell look which spared not to pierce me through till father broke the spell by saying—

“Nay, let the lad go, Nancy. He must not keep Mr. Cromwell waiting. Nay, whatever he may deserve he is not going to be hanged just at the present—he will e’en cheat the gallows for a time—let him go; he will be back ere long, like a bad shilling——” and his eyes were misty, as I could see, and he blew his nose most prodigious as he re-entered the house.

And so my mother’s face went with me all the way to London town save when Mistress Nell was filling all my thoughts with wondering whether she was sorry, why she had so flouted me, and such like dreamings which held my mind for the most part of the time.

London is a most monstrous large town, and after a few days was not greatly to my fancy, being, to my mind, too cramped and crowded, denying a man the room and space his Maker intended he should fill. There is no life like the life of a country gentleman to my mind. There is never a moment of quiet in the town, save in the hours just before the dawn, and then decent folk ought not to be awake to note it. But there is the trouble. There is so much reveling and gaming always toward in this great Babylon that, for many, the night is turned into day.

It is a great marvel to me whence comes all the tallow for the prodigious number of candles that are burned here every night. There are good houses and bad; and for the chief part, bad. How the many manage to endure life in the mean houses in which they eat and sleep, I cannot see; but there; perhaps they never had better and so have no personal experience of what life really is. Poor



wretches. They are so unknowing of how miserable their condition is that one's heart bleeds for them.

Not that there are not good houses; the nobility and the gentry are by no means so badly off and Whitehall hath great magnificence. But there were none which for a moment would compare, in all that is to be desired, with the Mere. Of what use is a great house which hath not a corner in it which is like home nor can ever grow dear to a man's heart? They must have cost a pretty penny but I am glad I shall never be asked to live in them.

We arrived late at night and proceeded at once to lodgings for which Mr. Cromwell had before arranged. They were not spacious but they will do as well as anything in London. Mr. Cromwell had for himself a large chamber for a sitting and receiving room, and off that he had a little closet wherein to sleep so small that I marveled how it could afford him air to snore with; for that he is a most capable snorer I make bold to believe from the fashion on which his nose is builded. I was not ill-pleased to find that the lodgings he had engaged for me were not in the same house with him but just around the corner; for I felt that possibly he might find me somewhat in his way at times when he might wish to consult with his fellows who are well employed in planning to defeat the vile conspiracy in high places against the liberties and the true religion of the English people; and I found, after, that there were other reasons to approve the width of this separation; which was not so great however, but that we were within easy call of each other.

The morning after our arrival I dressed myself with great care being asked by Mr. Cromwell to go with him to Westminster where he would show me some of the great men of whom I had heard so much; but truly, there is not a man-jack of them all whom I may not handle as easily as I do Tom Templeton. They may be my equals in mind and judgment (some of them) but I will engage to best any one of them at any time and at any manly exercise now in vogue.



Despite my care in the matter of my attire I could not but perceive that I was the object of much attention and vulgar curiosity as we passed through the streets, the which was not greatly to my liking; but I passed it all over save once when a hulking fellow with a butcher's apron and an inflamed countenance regarded me with that leering which seemed to betoken an unbecoming lack of respect. His nose I twisted bottom side up and left him holding it with both hands and with squirming symptoms of pain while I hurried to catch up with Mr. Cromwell who, absorbed in thought, had forgotten me and knew not that I had left him till I rejoined him.

"Why," asked he, like a man waking out of a sound sleep, "Where hast thou been and what hast thou been doing?"

"Only learning a London butcher a little good manners," I said.

He smiled, and said I must not be too quarrelsome but that it would not be amiss to introduce a little of the manners of the Fen country in London.

"Some of them have ways that need mending," he said; "but I do not conceive it to be the chief end of our errand here to look after the matter; and moreover," he added, "there are so many of them that, early as thou hast begun, I fear the job will prove too great for thee Master John, an thou dost wish to do it thoroughly, as I believe thou art used to do everything to which thou puttest thy hand."

I could wish Mr. Cromwell would give more attention to his dress. He wore the same all the time of our stay in London that he wore on the journey thither.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### HE WHIPS BULLY BEN AND IS RECEIVED AT COURT

26th May.

'TIS a long story, this of my trip to London, and it was late at night when I finished yesterday's recording; the hour was far past nine and I feel to-day the loss of sleep. But as it is still wet with only chance gleams of the sun I shall not go out but try to make a finish.

Mr. Pym, to my mind, is the most masterful man we met when we reached Westminster and had gone to a large chamber where, it seems, these great men in whose hands are, under God, the destinies of the English people, had arranged to meet to take counsel as to their plans of procedure. He doth hear, as I could see, some patiently, but the most of them impatiently; and oft cuts them short and vehemently states the question and the remedy, to his own satisfaction at least; and if they do not at first side with his views it is not long till they do for he hath his way speedily. And Hampden, too, I saw, he who made the bold fight against paying the ship-money illegally assessed upon him. He doth not look it, but Mr. Cromwell, whose cousin he is, saith he hath a most daring and enduring spirit and will yield to nothing opposing when he is in the right. Besides these there were many whose names are in all men's mouths, especially Sir Arthur Hazelrig, William Strode, Denzil Hollis, Lord Kimbolton, the Fairfaxes and Essex. They all seemed full of eager purpose and their eyes were, some somber with repressed fire and some shining with great eagerness to be at their parlous work.

For nothing is clearer in Mr. Cromwell's mind (in the which I do most heartily agree with him) than that the King hath been brought by his love for the Queen who



in turn is inspired and controlled by her Romish priests, to determine to make a bold stand and a bitter fight for the maintenance of prerogatives which may not live along with English liberty; the which will not only give him a free hand in the government of this kingdom but will also make for the success of papistical plottings and conspiracies to fasten upon us the accursed idolatries and wicked superstitions of Rome to the choking out of the true religion, which can thrive only in the free conscience. In the Commons is all the people's hope. Where else shall they look? For while among the Lords there be those who see aright and clearly yet there be many who are sadly tainted, and some of complete rottenness of heart; add to which they do fear the people, apprehending that in their success over the King by the wholesome curtailing of his prerogative there is danger that they, these Lords, too, shall be limited in the privileges which they have so far enjoyed.

That they may move rapidly (for time is precious) in their great work, and yet with that circumspection that shall not drive the Lords in a body away from them, leading them gradually on, for their help they must have, the Commons have no light and easy task. 'Tis a pity, too, that it is so; and Mr. Cromwell doth long for the day when the people will so strongly back up the Commons that they may bid the Lords defiance and tell them to go hang or else come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

"But of these things," said Mr. Cromwell to me, "while it is well that thou shouldst acquaint thyself sufficiently to enable thee to see where thou dost belong and be ready against the time when thou, too, shalt be called upon to play a part, it is not presently necessary that thou shouldst see all and into the bowels of all. There is much else in the town with which thou shouldst become acquainted and see with thine own eyes. I have no wish to keep thee at my tail, following, as is my calling and duty to which I am summoned by the Lord of all, the tedious steps and ramifications of negotiations, parleys, minings and counter-



minings and general strategy of the warfare that is toward. It is enough now that thou shalt see the end when the result has been accomplished.

“Meantime go you where you list; learn the lessons that do wait here for your nourishing; meet all men, study all; some thou wilt find worthy and to them cleave; others thou will not wish to fellow with; be not deceived by appearances; use thy wits now as thou never didst before; do not stint to enjoy thyself for the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth meant that His children should have pleasure in this world if He do, with the pleasure, send, in His wisdom, much pain; else had He not given us the song of birds, the glory of the flying clouds, the color and perfume of flowers, the unstained Heaven that sleeps in the eyes of the babe, the love of woman, above all the death of His dear Son that thereby this world shall become to us, if we will have it so, a Paradise. But let it be all with godliness; heed the warning whisper of His Holy Spirit and leave that quickly of which He bids thee beware.

“Thou hast a godly father and a saintly mother and hast been trained in all rightful apprehension. There are dangers before thee but thou must, sometime, meet them for thyself—since thou canst not always shirk thine own responsibility, hiding behind father and mother, and it may hap that this will be as good time as another for thee to begin the great battle of life which shall end when God wills, and, by His blessing, with triumph over all the powers of the Evil One. Thou knowest how to find thy way about I am persuaded; let me see as much of thee at our rooms as may be convenient and pleasant. And now go, and may the God of all grace go with thee.”

Never before had I heard Mr. Cromwell speak with such solemn weight and fire of winning affection as he did thus to me albeit his tone was low, as we stood in a corner of the great chamber which was so filled with the eager buzzing of the talk of earnest men. As he spoke I marveled what a great preacher of the Word he might be if he should but apply himself to it. His voice thrilled me



and his spirit entered into mine, and if he had then bid me draw sword and follow him in a mad rush through the King's guard to force the people's wish upon the throne itself, right joyously would I have answered to his summons. For a moment I stood pondering that one of so mean an appearance (for truly he is not comely to look upon) should possess such power; and then found my way out on the streets again.

There was the sweet scent of Spring in the air which even the pollution of dirty streets and foul gutters could not wholly kill; and there was on most men's faces a light of happy hope and joyous anticipation that, now the Parliament was called again, there would be salvation for the people. It had been a long and a weary time for the chosen of Israel since a Parliament had set to guard their rights; the King had ruled with a high hand and a stretched-out arm in disregard of the liberties of the people and had stubbornly refused to summon to his advice their representatives that he might learn what they would have; but now at last he had done so; and now was there hope that not only would popish machinations receive check but that all royal usurpation would cease; the illegal laying of tonnage and poundage and ship-money taxes, the raising of forced loans, the unwarrantable arrests and imprisonments by virtue of infamous Star Chamber process, of men innocent of crime and only guilty of resistance to Kingly tyranny, to this was there ground for belief a speedy end would be put.

For these things lie heavy and hard upon the hearts of all free Englishmen, and the Commons had been chosen with an eye single to the curing of these evils which will not be borne. And with this light of hope which made bright their faces there was seen in men's eyes the stern glance of fierce resolve that this should be the outcome of the conflict. Charles hath a great and a strong people to reckon with and he would do well to see it quickly.

But soon, in the ebb and flow of the countless thousands in the streets, in the ever changing panorama spreading be-



fore me, in the new and strange sights and sounds that challenged my attention my mind wandered, alas, from these, the matters of chiefest import, and lost itself in unworthier things. And so one day passed with another, this roaming of the streets being my greatest occupation, save that in the evening for two hours every day I did usually engage in most useful and enjoyable military exercises.

It came about through Mr. Cromwell, as might be surmised; for in the interval of his busy and requiring labors he took frequent opportunity to question me as to what I had seen, where I had been, and the like, with many friendly and most valuable hints as to things worthy of my attention; and one morning he took me out to the shop of one Anstruthers, a mercer and a man of God, one of the true men of the true faith, and secured for me the privilege of joining the daily training of his company of horse which were used to exercise for two hours in a great field near the outskirts of the town.

Mr. Anstruthers had been, in his youth, a soldier in the Low Country wars and, having a taste that way, had organized a band of horsemen for drill, at first for pleasure, but, as the imminence of hastening perils and the plainly-to-be-seen needs of the hour suggested, at last for preparation against the time when God's people shall take the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, to the bringing in of the reign of his Saints.

And right glad was I of this diversion which the dullness falling upon one strange and wandering about without proper companionship much felt at times, made indeed a most welcome thing; to the which must be added my natural liking for military exercises. Mr. Anstruthers is a master of the art and teaches with consummate skill; and Roger and I speedily became proficient, as we do in all things to which we set our minds, exercising almost daily.

One evening, returning from the drilling and feeling more than usually pleasant in spirit, for I had enjoyed



myself more than common, I was hailed by a hearty shouting of "Master Baldwin! Master Baldwin! 'Fore God never was I more pleased to meet a gallant gentleman, and whom I hold to be my friend!" and who should come cantering up but Sir Roger Birney?

At first I was not certain that I was glad to see him again, but his handsome face was so open and frank and he showed so much semblance of honest joy in his voice and his manner that I was fain to shake him heartily by the hand.

"Thou art the man above all others I would most have wished to see," he said. "Only to-day I was thinking of the gallant entertainment you gave us at the Mere—aye, and talking of it, too, with whom, think ye?"

"Indeed, Sir Roger, it would be difficult for me to guess, in this great hive of human beings of whom I know not half a score."

"With no one else than the Squire Walsingham and the gallant Knight, Sir Richard Hatton."

"And are they in London?"

"Sir Richard hath been here for some weeks; you know he hath been chosen to the Parliament, and the good Squire came only yesterday to see the opening."

"Why, this is a pleasant hearing for a lonely man and mighty glad am I to have it. The Squire is an old friend and I was much drawn to Sir Richard while you were in the Fens."

"And no less we to you. Why, it was at this very meeting we had to-day at the Fox and Goose that Sir Richard said of all men he had met he knew not your equal for those qualities that win men's hearts and he sang your praises most bravely, and be sure the Squire and I were not behind him. And now you can do no less than sup with us; we meet at the Fox and Goose in an hour from this, after which we will show you some rare sport which shall hearten you up, for you are looking somewhat sober to my thinking, Master Baldwin."

"Why then," I answered; "I have not indeed found your




London town a breeder of high spirits; for being alone for the most part, and knowing no one save a few members of the Parliament, who are all too busy to waste time on a country gawk, I have found time a little heavy on my hands."

With this I explained my case to him; by whose invitation I was in town, where I was lodged, and so forth. The end of it was that I saw Roger stabled and then went with him to the Fox and Goose.

And there, sure enough, even as Sir Roger had promised we found the Squire and Sir Richard; and hearty and cordial were our greetings and jolly was our supper, at the which we drank overmuch strong liquor, as good-fellowship seemed to inspire. When we were done Sir Roger politely expressed the hope that I had no entanglement with any fair lady for the evening which would forbid my giving them my company to the assembly room, where Bully Ben was to essay a new man come out of York, which was the Bully's own home; and it would be, he said, that Greek should meet Greek.

The proposal was not to my relish at first, but as all protested, seeing my coolness, that unless I joined them they would not feel that I had forgiven them their blunder at the Mere, for the which again they all besought my pardon, in the end I yielded and went.

The assembly room proved to be a huge, barn-like chamber, with a platform of rough boards in the center and rough benches raised in tiers about it. The platform was the arena upon which Bully Ben displayed his prowess and the benches were for the spectators who each paid an admission fee. At one end were raised boxes, three in number, with curtains, which I was told were for King Charles and certain of the Court whenever it pleased him to witness a bout. But, they explained, no one ever knew when His Majesty was present, for sometimes ladies accompanied him who would not for the world have it known that they were present at such scenes; the which sounded strange in my ears and I marveled what sort of ladies these might be.





Whether the King were there that night or not I knew not; but I was keenly interested in the bout. The Bully was a big fellow, having not quite my height but heavier, and with monstrous prodigious muscles, a bullet head which looked hard enough to split an oaken plank, a low forehead and little pig's eyes which ever darted quick and furtive glances about with a snaky gleam that was a gruesome thing to see. He looked a thorough brute and showed it before the night was over. His antagonist was neither so big nor so heavy nor so brutal in his aspect, nor so old a man as the Bully whom I judged to be about five and twenty.

The bout was not a long one. The difference in weight and strength the newcomer made up in part by his skill as a boxer, but not altogether. I was amazed at the manner in which feints and parries and the delivering of blows must have been practiced by the two to have reached such perfection. But the Bully was the easy victor, knocking his antagonist down and beating him most brutally after he had worn him out by defensive tactics, receiving himself only a few light blows on the body.

After the bout was over Sir Roger called the Bully to our place which was near the platform and presented him to me. The big fellow looked surprised when he heard my name and as if it was not unfamiliar to him, darting his little eyes all over me as if measuring me; then he smiled leeringly. When I saw what a brute he was in every sense I was more angry than ever that it had been dreamed that I would fight him; but I could say nothing.

Following this came a round of pleasures under the tutelage of the three friends. Every evening there was a cock-fight or some such diversion and twice again I saw the Bully put out each time a poor fool who was unfit to meet him. Mr. Cromwell was becoming more and more absorbed in his parliamentary duties and I saw him but seldom. When I did, I did not deem it wise to tell him of all the pleasures I had found in London for it would not have been right to take his mind from graver things.



But at last he heard of it, and more than I have yet told, from my own lips.

One evening, supping as usual with my friends and many others who had been drawn into our company, the drink seemed to have a new and strange effect on me. Sure I have never before nor since drunk liquor of such potency. This however I did not perceive till we had reached the assembly room where, again, we were to witness the Bully's bloody batterings. I observed on entering that the great place was much more thronged than was customary but paid little heed to it because of the interest which my coming had seemed to arouse. I was annoyed at first but thinking, after, that perhaps the liquor, which I felt quite sensibly, had affected my eyesight, I took my seat; and soon the bout was begun. It was a disgusting, sickening spectacle of a hulking coward wreaking a coward's vile and blood-thirsty instincts upon a defenseless man; for his antagonist was no sort of a match for him; and turning away I refused to look any longer on the shameful spectacle. At last the shouts of the spectators told me that the end had come, and the poor beaten victim was taken out.

A strange sort of silence had fallen upon the throng which contrary to custom, stayed seated, but of this I was scarce conscious, and had turned to my companions saying, "Come, let us get out of this," when I heard a voice at my elbow—

"So this is the young cockerel from the Fens who thinks he can whip Bully Ben?"

Facing about I saw the Bully within two feet of me with a sneer upon his ugly cruel lips and a malignant look in his pig's eyes. My blood boiled in my veins but I controlled myself.

"Come," I said to my friends, "let us go. I'll not stay here to bandy words with this fellow," and I half rose to my feet.

Swift as a stroke of lightning the Bully's palm smote my cheek, throwing my head down on my shoulder!

What could I do? My heart was on fire and my brain



in a whirl and a taunting laugh from the Bully and a glance about the room showing all eyes upon me, completed my discomfiture. Before I was aware of what I was doing I sprang upon the platform—and at the same moment I thought I saw the curtains in the Royal box shaken.

“Then you will fight me?” asked the Bully. It cut like a whip, but at once all flurry left me and I was as cool as ever I was in my life. It could not be helped now; whosoever the fault I was there and I must fight. A mad sort of joy seized me. I would at least avenge the poor brute’s victims.

“I’ll not fight you, my man,” I said, as calmly as I could, stripping off sword, coat and doublet, “but I shall give you the drubbing your cowardly brutality deserves; pray God, you, that I do not kill you.”

Then went up a shout from the spectators that almost upset me. Sir Richard sprang upon the platform with a great oath, declaring he would attend me as my second.

The Bully stood eyeing me curiously—

“Do you care to wager that you can make good your boasting?” he asked.

“Come up here,” I said, “and imitate the man you pretend to be but are not. This shall be the last time you will ever dare to fight even a cripple.”

He jumped at me like a mad bull; but I was ever good at fisticuffs and had learned some points from watching him. I stepped quickly aside and buffeted him on the ear, sending him staggering across the platform. Again and again he returned and I found him a better man than I had thought, and a pluckier. Once he knocked me clean off my legs with a tremendous blow on the chest. But I was cool and I hammered him till he bled like a stuck pig. At last, in an attempt to rush in for close quarters with me he slipped and presented the under side of his jaw; quickly shooting my right fist upward and putting my shoulder under it there was a crack like a pistol shot, and I lifted his huge form and with a mighty thrust backed



by all my scorn and anger hurled it across the platform; and it lay there motionless.

The beholders were yelling like demons; this time I was sure I saw the curtains of the royal box violently disturbed but saw no one. I stood waiting for the return of the Bully but he lay so still I thought he was dead; and I felt no pang of remorse. Then those who had charge ran to him and after examination raised his shoulders and, dragging him like a huge dead hog (and I cared not if he were dead), got him away from sight. I had conquered Bully Ben, the man who had never before met his match.

But my exultation at this was not so great as that I felt because I had avenged the poor wretches who had been put up for him to show his powers on.

Each moment the excitement grew wilder and from all parts of the room men came thronging to shake my hand, and their praises were fast cooling my ardor; when one came toward me (I was afterwards told it was my Lord Falkland), bearing a great purse which he sought to thrust in my hand. When I resisted, he cried out—

“But it is thine. Thou hast won it fairly, sir. It was a noble fight.”

“I know not what you mean,” I said, a sickening fear seizing my heart.

“’Tis the purse of £1000 which was offered for the man who should best Bully Ben, and thou hast done it!”

I looked about for my friends. The Squire stood not far off, looking mighty red, and yellow, and anxious, and perturbed, as did Sir Richard, only he was shame-faced and deep flushed; standing further back on a raised seat was Sir Roger, pale and blue, staring and excited, his eyes glittering like diamonds.

“The purse is thine, Master Baldwin,” he cried, “and thou hast won it fairly, as we knew thou wert sure to do. And I have won £300 myself!”

I turned again to the Squire and Sir Richard but they both evaded my eye while they worked away from me; and



then the whole miserable deceit and disgrace dawned on me. I had been tricked and duped and made a fool of.

Before God I say it, I could not have felt worse if Bully Ben had whipped me.

Again Lord Falkland pressed the purse upon me, and as I took it in my hand the roar that went up was even more than any that had gone before. But I motioned for quiet which, being had, I said—

“I had no purpose to debase myself by fighting with yon hulking brute; I have been unworthily tricked and duped into this and may God forgive the men who, under falsely pretended friendship, did lure me into the trap. I protest upon my honor, that I feel such shame and humiliation as I never felt before. May God have mercy on me, for I never meant to do this thing. As for the purse, I'll none of it; but as 'tis mine, let it be divided between the three poor wretches who have been so unmercifully beaten and abused by this great coward. As for me, I company no more with men who countenance such things.”

I handed back the purse to Lord Falkland, turned away, and putting on my coat and sword, stalked out alone; and with a bitter heart and tears which I could not repress, went to my rooms. Here I sat the night long, feeding upon the shame that had been put upon me; and, praying by times for God's forgiveness, waited for the day.

When the first streaks of dawn revealed the streets and made them light I proceeded to Mr. Cromwell's rooms, for he is ever an early riser and hath much to employ every hour. He greeted me pleasantly, but at first with an air of abstraction, for his mind was doubtless filled with weighty matters; then at a second glance he rose hastily from his seat.

“Why, Master John; thou dost looked disturbed. What's amiss?” And then he quickly added, his look growing anxious, “You are not wont to come so early. I pray God nothing hath gone wrong with you.”

“Pray God, my good friend, that He may forgive me,



for I am a miserable sinner and no longer worthy to be called His servant."

And then I told him all, refusing to sit as he by gestures urged, till I had done with the whole shameful story. I disguised nothing but told him how I had been companying with base roysterers, what our diversions had been, and my fight with Bully Ben, going back to the visit of my three betrayers to the Mere that he might know all. As I spoke his face was like a mask, hard and set; but when I had ended there was the difference of a twinkle in his eyes and a look of relief.

"And thou didst give him a good beating, then? God bless thee, lad, for that—and forgive thee, too; though clearly thou wast trapped and not greatly to blame. Still, thou hadst been companying with dissolute and froward men and frequenting all too much the tap rooms. But for that I should do penance as well as thou, for I turned thee loose to be their prey when it may be I had better have guarded thee. But since it must have come some day no doubt it is as well that it is over, and thy lesson learned with no great loss after all—not so great as might be. Thou wilt walk more warily after this.

"And thou didst best the Bully! Sure it must have been a rare sight to see and I would I had been witness of it. God forgive me, but I cannot dissemble. Then thou didst fling their licentiousness in their teeth, too? It was bravely done. They will e'en learn what manner of men we breed in the Fens, I am thinking. Why there, John; it is bad, but not so bad as it might be and not beyond the forgiveness of God which thou must seek in season and out of season with thy whole heart."

"And that I have been doing ever since it happened; and that will I ever do till the assurance of pardon shall come to me."

"Why then, amen! And so there is no more to be said. And now if thou dost need food as thou dost look to need rest, thou wilt not be sorry to see the breakfast in."

I felt better; and was not ill pleased to see the meal



brought presently in. As we did eat we talked but ever of things other than those in which I had been lately engaged. At the end of the meal Mr. Cromwell betook himself to committee work at Westminster while I, by his recommendation (and I was nothing loth), went to my rooms and to bed, where I slept until the time had come to mount Roger and join Mr. Anstruther's troop in the military exercises.

The which I did much refreshed and feeling that if the Lord would but take a reasonable view of my case He would surely blot out my sin and give me another trial, at the which I am sure I shall do better.

When I reached the drill ground and so soon as Mr. Anstruther saw me he wheeled his troop to a front and commanded a salute which was given with a shout, at which I was greatly puzzled.

"We are proud of you, Master Baldwin," cried Mr. Anstruther, "for you have smitten the enemies of the Lord, not only by thy beautiful beating of Bully Ben but by the dressing down which you gave the popish reprobates who have made their brutal practices the shame of all true and godly Englishmen. Nay, nay," he went on when he saw I would speak, "I know how thou dost feel; that thou art shamed that thou hast been engaged in such a brawl; but I like not a man, even if he be a Christian, to be a milk-sop; thou wert tricked into it, but thou didst play the man, and again, we are proud to have thee in our ranks. Let not your heart be overmuch troubled. Repent, aye, as in duty bound, but not as one without hope; for I tell thee thou hast done more good than harm."

And thus I soon learned that all London knew of that which I would had not become so public.

The next day Mr. Cromwell brought to my rooms a brave young fellow, Edward Chenowith, Esquire; a man of a good Welsh family, and employed about the Commons House of Parliament; he being, it may be, three years my senior.

"Mr. Chenowith," said Mr. Cromwell, "hath had much



experience in the life of London and his business calleth him often to the Palace, where he sees all the great men and fair women of the court. He hath been kind enough to say that it will please him much to be a guide and friend to an ingenuous youth from the Fens who hath begun his London education at the wrong end."

And Mr. Chenowith protested his great wish to be of service to me, saying that he had heard much of me—

"Of that for which he hath lately become most conspicuous, look you Mr. Chenowith," interrupted Mr. Cromwell, "Master Baldwin is not vain; indeed, he holds it a shameful thing—this much to do him justice."

"For the which I do yet the more honor him;" replied Chenowith, "and ineed it was the knowledge of this that made me the more anxious to make his acquaintance."

"Be assured then, Mr. Chenowith, he is worthy of your very loving regard."

This was the beginning of a most pleasant acquaintance, for I found in the young gentleman not only true manliness and approved godliness but those qualities which do ever, when met, put one on his mettle and make him strive to do his best. He had much leisure and where I had walked with unseeing eyes he showed me much that was worth the attention of any man. And the society into which he generously brought me was of the sort which taught me what Mr. Cromwell meant when he said that my London education had been begun at the wrong end. I had not thought there were so many godly people among the polite in London, owing to the corrupting influence of the Queen, who, with her popish parasites, hath labored zealously to pervert those over whom she is placed to rule.

And so it happened that one evening Mr. Chenowith said that his official duty would call him to the Court the next morning, and invited me to go with him.

"It is well worth seeing, once in a way, at least," he said; "and it can do you no harm. You are too well grounded in the true faith to be damaged by so small a breath of popish air as you'll get there, I'll warrant. And as it is about the



hour the King gives his morning audience you may catch a glimpse of him; and Charles is, in his manner and presence, a king one might well go a long distance to look upon."

Engaging to meet him to go to the palace if Mr. Cromwell should approve I left him; and full of visions of what I might encounter the next day but with no thought or dream of what did then happen, I went at once in search of my great and good friend.

He regarded me most earnestly while I told him of Mr. Chenowith's offer and I feared he was about to advise that I should not go; but he did otherwise.

"Charles is a suave and courtly Prince," he said, "and it will be a lesson in manners any man might take and be thankful for. You will not forget that beneath the softness of his demeanor lie hidden purposes which must not be allowed to ripen in England; and I rejoice that you will have something of interest to tell your friends when you get back to the Fens. The dear old Fens!" and he sighed as he said it.

Promptly on time we set forth to the Palace the next day. I had attired myself with the greatest care, my hair newly curled and a famous new scent on my 'kerchief, a sweeping new plume to my hat and other brave furnishings, to say nothing of a fine new sword which my father's liberality had enabled me to buy. Mr. Chenowith was also smartly appareled, and even if I ought not yet will I say that we were not an ill-looking pair.

Mr. Chenowith soon did his official errand and then taking me in hand led me about to acquaint me with the grandeur of the home of England's King. And truly my pen could not compass the tale of all that I saw. It was vastly more than imagination had pictured. Yet with all its splendor would I rather live at the good old Mere than in Whitehall.

As we walked I was made acquainted with many famous men and made my best leg to many beautiful women; but there again we of the Fens have nothing to be ashamed of. Mistress Eleanor Hedges, my sister Betty and my loving



mother will outmatch anything I saw at King Charles's court. I was most kindly greeted by all and the men especially were prodigious polite; and when we reached the great audience chamber which was thronged, I was so rudely stared at that I felt my choler rise; but restrained myself from making any show of it by the thought that I had already achieved far more notoriety than was to my liking.

While we were slowly making our way through the throng the great doors at the end of the Chamber swung back and at once on the warning cry "The King!" all the babel of noise became hushed and the people present pressed back on either side to leave a passage-way for His Majesty.

Charles walked slowly down the room nodding and smiling now and then to a favorite and sometimes halting for an instant to say a word to one here and there. He was followed by a number of fine gentlemen among them being, as Mr. Chenowith after said, the young Earl of Northumberland to whom Charles seems much attached, the Scots Marquis Hamilton, and Lord Collington; but I was much disappointed to miss the sight of that traitor to the people's cause, Sir Thomas Wentworth the newly created Earl of Strafford and Baron Raby, who hath been sent to Ireland on an errand to seek support for the King in his struggle to enslave the free men of that land.

In the back-pressing to make room for the King it so happened that I was left in the front rank and so had a good view of him; and to say truth he looketh and moveth every inch a King. I am his enemy so long as he doth strive to oppress his people and force popery on them; but I must e'en speak the truth about him. The sight of him had such an effect on me that I feared for my very loyalty to the cause of the true religion and the right of Englishmen to resist tyranny, as I never feared anything before. His face and figure are handsome, lofty and dignified; his port and carriage are majestical and his manner can be of a threatening kingliness, or of the most charmingly winning lovingness.



When within a few feet of me his eyes met mine with I thought a look very like recognition as a gruff growl, coming I was told from Sir Jacob Astley, that bluff old soldier, fell upon my ear—

“The Fens cockerel, by’r Lady!”

The King stepped forward and extended his hand with a smile that shot straight to my heart and plump on my knees went I, before I could think, to kiss it.

“You are Master John Baldwin, I think,” said the King.

I bethought me of my father, and Nell, and my sister Betty, and my mother, and I crowded down my heart, which did beat most prodigious as I rose and answered, as boldly as I might—

“John Baldwin of Baldwinsmere, your Majesty.”

“The younger son of that brave and courtly gentleman, Sir William Baldwin?”

“It is my pride and boast that I am, your Majesty.”

“Why then, it is a thing you may well be proud of, for no truer knight dwells in any kingdom. But you have claims of your own, methinks. Have I not heard that you put to deserved punishment that great brute, Bully Ben?”

“It shames me that Your Majesty hath heard that I so disgraced myself—but I’ll not lie—it is so.”

“Nay, there is no room for shame,” replied the King. “It was as gallant a deed,” and he bent to whisper in my ear, “as ever I witnessed.”

Then the King *was* present! I went hot all over.

“And especially was I pleased to learn that thou didst not spare to denounce the brutal sport of boxing even in the faces of its adherents.”

He paused an instant, as if in thought.

“The King of England cannot have too many such gallant and true young gentlemen in his Kingdom, nor,” he added, musingly, “about his person. Would you like a place at the Court?”

“No, Your Majesty.”

A slight frown as if of annoyance passed quickly over his face.



"If it be not kingly to be curious then am I unkingly," and he smiled most winningly; "for I would fain have your reasons for refusing what so many young gentlemen would give their heads for. Why would you not like it?"

"I pray Your Majesty will have me excused from answering."

At this he frowned ominously and at once all the foolish, wild beating of my heart ceased and I was myself again.

"Nay, I will have an answer!" he said, brusquely.

"And thou wilt, Your Majesty," I looked him fairly in the eye, and wondered I did not tremble, "I'll not beat about the bush; it is because I am an Independent in religion, and do not like your oppression of free Englishmen."

Instantly his brow went clear again and throwing back his head with a laugh that was a contagion he cried, measuring me from top to toe with a glance of archest humor the while—

"Is Saul also among the prophets? Truly Master Baldwin, thou art as bold as thou art brave and I'll warrant the realm holds no braver. I'm sorry I have not your approval for my way of ruling, but thou art honest and I like the honest dislike of an honest antagonist a thousand times better than the fawning sycophancy of the double-faced, smooth-tongued man of whose loyalty I can but fear a test. No harm shall come to thee for honestly speaking thy mind—and yet I make bold to think that I might change it by a fair showing of my side of the case. That's a pretty sword you wear, sir. Will you let me see it?"

I turned the scabbard so that the hilt presented itself to his hand.

"If Your Majesty will deign to draw it. It is a good Toledo blade;" for I am proud of my new sword—was proud then and am prouder now.

"A marvelous fine piece of steel and workmanship," said His Majesty glancing carelessly along the blade; then, suddenly, raising his eyes to mine with an irresistible look of command he said with great authority: "To your knees, sir!"



And down I went again like a puppet when the string is pulled, and without an idea in my head. The King tapped the blade on my shoulder—

“Rise, Sir John Baldwin!” and smilingly handing me back my sword he passed quietly on.

I know not how long I stood there staring stupidly straight ahead of me, the naked blade still in my hand, till Chenowith jogged my arm and I turned to see the King, now some distance away, looking back and still smiling most joyously.

“I were a worse King than even you deem me, Sir John,” he cried, “an I should fail to knight so gallant and honest a man.”

I rode home in a maze; and still perplexed and stupid went to Mr. Cromwell with my news in all its details.

“If the King had always shown such good sense and proper judgment,” commented Mr. Cromwell, “the realm would not be in so parlous a state as it is. He hath gleams of the rarest and most kingly discernment but, alas, only gleams. Neither do I believe he hopes thus to win you over—he did it in all honesty, I’ll do him the credit to say so much. May God bless you, Sir John!”



## CHAPTER XIX

### HIS ADVENTURE WITH THE LADY DYSERT

30th May.

THERE can be nothing justly said against the goose as a bird; he hath his ways and walketh in them (what time he doth not float or swim) after the manner of his kind with a simple honesty which many men might take for a model. In that condition of life unto which it hath pleased God to call him he comports himself uprightly serving his allotted years and use with all becoming decency. But in that he doth breed quills, which the restless ingenuity of man hath found a way to use as instruments of torture in the scratching and defacing of good blue paper, whereby an additional curse hath come upon the sons of Adam, he is a vile bird.

Had there been no goose quills there had been no writing (save in the way of the ancient peoples, who I believe, very properly compelled their slaves trained to the task, to keep their records), and I might have been a happier man. But there; why complain of a thing which may not now be cured? It hath bound me like a truckling starveling many long hours to this table, painfully scrawling in this great book; and indeed doth seem to breed a madness in me; else why do I thus spend so much grievous toil?

Truth is I hate the goose quill and the ink-horn as the poor papists believe that Sathanus doth hate the water they esteem holy because, forsooth, a superstitious priest hath mumbled bad Latin over it; and yet do I ever return to them like one doing a penance, and am led to do so only by the hope that from my loins shall spring a race of goodly men who will be fain to know whence began many things they will find within themselves; and to such



it shall be a comfort to learn what manner of man their grand-sire was.

My last entry was so prolonged (in a mad hope that had seized me that I might press on and conclude my London story, and so there should come an end when I might have repose and refresh myself in more manly employ), that when I ended, and then not at the "Finis" I was so wearied and disgusted I could not bring myself to go on. And so three days have gone by since my last entry.

The rest hath done me good; and having been down to the Mere to gather fresh quills, I'll to it again; and it shall go hard with me an I do not win out this time.

After I had been knighted by King Charles there was a great to-do about me; the wits and fine men of fashion of the town besieged my lodgings and I was bidden to dinners routs and all those diversions with which the people of the Court circles spend their time; meeting many fair women who were most kind to me as is the gracious habit of fair ladies; (as for the men some behaved as those to whom a nod is as good as a wink, with that admirable discretion which hath its rise in a wholesome consideration as to what might happen did they not show a fair respect; and they were shrewdly right); and I learned so much of modish clothes and fine manners that I bade fair to become a gallant of the best approved pattern.

There was but one woman of them all who did greatly stir my soul but for whom, despite I did (and do), greatly admire her, I have a respect which doth seem to almost reach a fear—and it is, for me, a strange and not accustomed feeling. This was the Lady Dysert, to whom the Marquis of Hamilton did present me one evening at a garden rout in the grounds of the house of the Earl of Essex.

A retinue of assiduous worshippers followed the Lady Dysert, who is not only most beautiful and of gracious mien, such as would win the bird off the bush, but was attired in most strikingly handsome apparel the which did seem to set off and accentuate her charms most ravishingly.



I early learned her name, which had been familiar to me because of the great repute she doth enjoy in London, but while I admired her at a distance I had no thought to seek her acquaintance since what would she have in common with a clod-hopping lad from the Fens? But as I gazed I was suddenly aware of her regard fixed upon me and at a word from her the Marquis (who doth seem a restless gentleman, with ever some secret enterprise upon his mind), approached and with a monstrous fine bow craved the honor of presenting Sir John Baldwin, "the hero of the Fen country," as he did phrase it, to the Lady Dysert. At the first I was but ill-pleased (for I like not this Sir Johning which sometimes I doubt savors of impertinent sneering), and my face must have showed it, for my Lord added quickly and with seeming great earnestness—

"Nay, but it is her Ladyship's wish and she will not be denied. She hath laid her commands upon me!"

Why, then, there was no more to be said; John Baldwin is not the man to deny what, in honor, a pretty woman may wish; and indeed, why should my Lady Dysert not have the pleasure (and profit I humbly trust) of my acquaintance? Truly, I knew of no good reason.

There was a scattering of the dandies as we approached her Ladyship; the which was not to my mind unbecoming as they made room for me. Her Ladyship half rose from her chair with a very pretty air of confusion whereat I was much astonished, for it was as if she were suddenly face to face with a most excellent and agreeable surprise—and yet she had sent for me and must have expected me.

The young Earl of Northumberland had but a day or so before taught me a most becoming fashion of bowing to a lady; and indeed, he is an ingenuous young nobleman to whom I am much in debt for the mending of the manners of the Fens, the which while good are by no means the manners of the Court, I must allow. And so, squaring myself as I had been taught and clapping my hat with the new feather over the place where I thought my heart had his seat (I have since learned that he is much higher up



in my inwards), while I placed my hand firmly on the hilt of my sword and made it stick straight to the rear (and when buying, I had chosen one of a length in harmony with my size), I brought my head down almost to her Ladyship's feet; then throwing back my body and shaking my curls I looked into a vastly pretty pair of eyes which smiled with such a glance of mingled admiration and timid deference as was mighty taking; and in truth there was that quality about the eyes which seems to sink into the breast of a man. I know not what words she said but only saw that the whitest hand, liker to the cup of a pure white lily than aught else in the world, was held out timorously as it might seem toward me; whereupon (as I had further been instructed by the Earl of Northumberland it was the fashion to do in such cases) I fell upon my knee (the right knee), and taking that hand in mine (where, now in my great paw, it seemed even more like to the tender petal of that white lily, and truly, it was as soft), I gently but with most earnest feeling pressed my lips upon it. Rising to my feet again I could not fail to note a soft wave of color sweeping over her Ladyship's face while those wondrous eyes showed once again a look of what seemed a sweet confusion.

There shot through me a peculiar thrilling (something like what I have noted before nor have found a cure for) a tingling of my nerves, at the which I was for an instant discomposed fearing I might become suddenly ill (and my mother's physic-box so far away—I will trust no other), but that soon passed; although there remained during all the time of the discourse I held with my Lady, a feeling of singular pleasure; and ever when my thoughts turn upon the matter there cometh back to me that same sweet thrilling or something very like it, which, however, I no longer fear, since it is followed by no other bad symptoms.

“And now gentlemen,” said her Ladyship with a cheerful archness which one would not have looked for in one who but this moment was so full of timidity and gentle discomposure, “and now gentlemen you will kindly give



us leave? Sir John and I have matters of serious import upon which to confer and they are not of a nature that they may be publicly discussed, neither. So by your fair leave——” and she spread a mighty fine courtesy to her courtiers who showed in their faces no great pleasure at their dismissal, (save that I thought there was a merry twinkle in Hamilton’s eye, and Northumberland winked at me knowingly). I did not understand nor have time to comprehend her meaning for a great tun of a red-wattled man pressed close to my side and said— “My name is Sir Charles Stuart!”

His manner and tone albeit he spoke low, misliked me, and I was somewhat wroth at it. So I replied with, nevertheless, all respectful consideration—

“Why, then, there are two men of that name in London and both great,—each in his way, sir.”

Sir Charles’s face turned a swift purple and his eyes went red as he returned—

“I will see you, anon, in another place, young sir.”

“Those who have business or pleasure with me do not find it hard to see me, Sir Charles.”

“I have a business with you which shall be a pleasure to me, at least.”

I bowed and turned to join her Ladyship who was quietly biding the end of our colloquy when, to my surprise, for we had spoken so low that I had no thought we could be overheard in the bustle of the moving crowd, my Lady coolly observed in her soft flute-like tones—

“It would be an ill thing Sir Charles did I fail to advise that you do *not* see Sir John anon, ‘in another place’ for the ‘business’ you contemplate; for he hath a reputation which hath reached even to me as one prompt to respond when there are those who wish to ‘see’ him, and so far as I can learn always face to face, for I have as yet never heard the description of his back given.”

Sir Charles bowed low to her Ladyship who, seizing my arm as might an impulsive child, cried—

“Come, we will garrison the arbor and hold it against



all comers! Sir Charles is a testy old man who needs a lesson which I hope you may not be called upon to give him—though I know of no one who, to my thinking, is better fitted for the task,” and she was glancing at me with a sidelong look from her beautiful eyes. By this we were in the arbor alone and shaded by its abundant foliage from all without. We sat upon a rustic seat together; and at once I felt greatly at home and vastly comfortable.

“Why, Sir Charles is a stranger to me. I knew not there was another of the same name as the King nor can I imagine what business or pleasure he can have with me.”

“Is it true?” she cried merrily. “Indeed I thought you knew that in your bow to me, which in faith was most prodigious fine” (and here I rose to my feet and bowed again which, according to the instructions of Northumberland, is the meet and proper thing to do in acknowledging a lady’s compliment and then I sat again); “in making your bow you thrust your long sword with such force and vigor into Sir Charles’s mid-riff that he was bent double and I feared would have a stroke. I protest that but for manners’ sake I had laughed in the poor man’s face.”

“Indeed I knew naught of it and would not have given him discomfort for the world. But he should know that. Why should he be wroth at so small an accident?”

“You must know, Sir John, that Sir Charles doth hold himself a cousin to the King, but how he traces his kinship ’tis hard to say since he was nothing but a plain Scotch gentleman till he went to the Low Country wars, where his valor gained him some fame and his Knighthood. He is mighty touchy of his dignity and ever ready to draw sword on small provocation.”

“But he shall not draw sword with me—at least not presently—for I shall e’en explain to him that I meant him no discourtesy nor harm neither.”

“But an if he shall not accept your explanation?”

“That he will do never fear, my dear Lady Dysert; an he be a gentleman he must; to do otherwise would be to grievously impugn my honor (who am also a gentleman)



by the insinuation that I have lied to him; and no gentleman, in such a case, will do such a thing."

"But an if he do otherwise Sir John, what then?"

Now it ill beseemeth a man to be talking to a woman of his purposes in such matters as this or, to say truth, of any thing of the sort in which he may have been engaged; and while I knew what I should do if Sir Charles should refuse to receive my explanation yet did I not think it of such consequence as to occupy the Lady Dysert's mind with it, nor was I minded to tell her of it.

I at once bethought me that Northumberland had instructed me that the best way to please and entertain a lady, whether old or young, fair or homely, was to expatiate upon her charms; aye, and he swore that if she had none it was even more incumbent that one should invent and ascribe to her all that is beautiful that might be found in her if she were otherwise; and surely here were charms upon which a man might dwell in very truth and honor to the excluding of all else for a week by the calendar. So, eyeing her closely and yet with all courteous respect, to it I went—and found it not unpleasant.

"Hath any one ever told your Ladyship of the wondrous loveliness of your eyes?"

"Fie, Sir John, what is this?"

"Nay, in truth I am a very bungler. I should have asked 'Hath any one ever failed to tell you of their gracious beauty?'"

"Why, then, Sir John, is this the way of the Fens? If it is, sure it must be the sweetest country in the world to live in."

"If it be not the fashion in London to speak the truth straightforwardly, which I conceive to be a most righteous and godly thing to do, it is so in the Fens. If your Ladyship should visit that goodly heritage, making it bright and glorious as the Eden whence our first parents were driven and any man was there found who should fail to fall down and worship your eyes then would a certain young cub of a new-made Knight I wot of most infallibly crop the



knave's ears and drive him out of a land in which he were unfit to dwell. 'Twere sacrilege to thus fail to appreciate one of God's most perfect gifts."

Lady Dysert sat with gaze fastened on a rose the which, holding it in her lap, she was slowly tearing apart leaf by leaf. There was again the softly suffused color in her cheeks I had noted when I kissed her hand. Swiftly the lashes (they were marvelous long and silky) flew up and turning, she poured such a dazzling beam of effulgence into my eyes that I was fain to shield them with my hat, the while she cried, bashfully I thought, and wondered why she should—

"Which is, Sir John, the Fens or——"

"Your eyes, your Ladyship, how could you doubt?"

"But there are two of them, and you said '*one* of God's gifts.'"

"'Most perfect gifts,' my Lady. How could I have meant anything else or how, when looking into them, could I remember there were two when I saw therein only the one most sweet soul which they do mirror forth? Forgive the awkwardness and stupidity of an uncouth country lad all untrained to the ways of Courts and the gracious company of fair ladies of fashion and who may only say what he feels in the rude speech of his unschooled nature."

(Now in this I do confess I was somewhat less than ingenuous; for in verity, I did mean to refer to the Fens as "one of God's most perfect gifts," for in the Fens was I born and here have I lived; and sure there can be no other place in all the world to equal it. But when she flashed that look upon me from eyes wide-opened and glorious in the innocence of their all unconscious charm, the words e'en plumped out of themselves.)

"Ah, Sir John, you confuse and discompose me with such marvelous pretty compliments! The courtiers of the King may well be put to school to the Knight of the Fens to learn how to say the sweetest sounding things with the most perfect grace."

"Indeed then, my Lady, the lesson would be but short,



as I would teach it—whether they should be long in learning or no; but that they could not be if the charmingest among women, my Lady Dysert, were set for them to practice on—for I should bid them but speak the truth they must surely feel in the fittest words they might command. But a truce to this my Lady; these things being old and familiar to you must be tedious in repeating. Nor have I any wish that you should think me a maker of fine phrases or a speaker of pretty compliments which are not meant, for therein you do mistake the sort of training I have had (which hath all been in the Fens), and the sincerity of my nature as well, which will not let me stoop to dissimulation even to please, albeit I am told it is the custom at Court. Since I fail here to have you understand me aright let us pass to other grounds of discourse. These ‘matters of serious import’ which we were to discuss; what are they? Tell me of them.”

Now the Lady Dysert must be a good five years my senior or at least three and twenty years of age, to my judgment; yet doth she not look so old by several years; and as she sat there idly twisting her hands about or tearing a flower with fingers that were soft as the petals which she toyed with, looking timidly now and again at me with glances which shone with a soft and sleeping fire veiled with the protesting modesty of shy maidenhood, she seemed a very child, scarcely out of school, too sweet and tender to be in the gay intriguing world where I had found her.

“It may be as well that they should wait,” she said softly. “I am persuaded that another will be a better time. But pray tell me, Sir John, you must have fair women in the Fens—I cannot believe that the ease of—your—of your manner, the grace with which you move” (she did not know Northumberland had drilled me), “and the apparent sincerity of your—of—of—I mean the perfect honesty of the heart that shines in all you do and—and—say, is but a mere birth-right. For such things are gained only in a school where lovely women are the teachers—they cannot be learned elsewhere. And you must have many such most



accomplished friends in the Fens who I am fain to think have taught you—and they must have been happy teachers to have had such a pupil and the Fens must be a happy spot to hold so much that is sweet and noble.”

“Indeed there is a woman there, and a fair, my Lady, who hath taught me all of honesty I know; and it doth warm my heart to hear you praise her so justly.”

“And what is her name?” There was a sudden sharpness to her tone the which I had not perceived before and which sounded as of weariness, so that I feared that she was tiring of me, as well she might, for who was I to take her time when so many fine beaux were about?

“The Lady Nancy Baldwin,” I answered.

“Ah! A relative. A cousin perhaps. You are most fortunate to have such a cousin, Sir John. You must love her dearly?”

“Nay, Lady Dysert, no cousin. The Lady Nancy is my mother; the fairest, sweetest and best among women and I do love her dearly but by no means so much as she doth deserve.”

“Ah!” and she sighed restfully. “It is high praise for a son who so loves his mother—it is beautiful.”

“And where is the son who doth not? But there! there is but one Lady Nancy Baldwin and other lads must e’en put up with what God hath given them; and yet, while there can be no other so dear, so sweet, so fair and so good, every lad must hold his mother a queen—not knowing the superlative excellence which belongs to mine alone he misses nothing but each shall find perfection in his own, I hope.”

“And are there no other fair ladies in the Fens whom you often meet?”

“My sister Betty and after her none other I can recall.” (As for Nell she is but a child—she will doubtless grow a fine woman enough in time; but somehow I felt that she should not properly come into the discourse.)

“Are you sure there are no others?”

“Just so sure as I am that there never was before such



exquisite contrast as your pearl-white teeth and rose-red lips do give for man's admiring."

She blushed; and then quickly fell to talking of my mother, of Betty, and all that concerned me. I told her of my horse, my dogs, the hunting for wild geese and ducks, the shooting in the stubble, and so forth; in all of which she seemed most interested. Then she was loudly called for without. She quickly rose—

"It is my aunt. I must go. You must come to see me, and very, *very* soon."

Somehow in going she stooped as if to take something from the seat; and as I turned to help her her face passed swiftly across mine and something soft and sweet as a rose-leaf touched my lips. I thought it was her mouth—but it could not have been—but it was cool and sweet and soft and fragrant.

I thought much of the matter after and could make nothing of it save that I should dearly love to have the like happen to me again. My experience in that direction hath not been large. I am at a loss to find a comparison for it.

It was not like my mother's kiss, which is tender and loving and doth make me feel that I ought to be mighty good to deserve her; nor was it like Betty's kiss which, while it is sweet and warm and sisterly yet doth lack something I cannot explain of that which came to me in the arbor and which, in good sooth, was like a very dream kiss—only of a better quality.

And beside these I can remember no other kisses from women than those that in my childhood days were bestowed by my mother's friends who ever seemed to think it a duty to kiss me; and one that Nell did once give me for catching a bird for her—but she was only a girl and had been running and at the same time eating bread spread with jam, and she was hot and in a hurry, and the jam was sticky, and it was but a pecking smack such as left nothing behind to last longer than when I got my face washed.

And, if I may tell it all, I have advised with my sister



Betty since I came home, first pledging her to secrecy; but all that I could get from her was that of course it could not have been a kiss, for why, she demanded scornfully should Lady Dysert wish to kiss a great hulking, awkward, clumsy, blundering Stupid like me? And further she did give it as her opinion that the Lady Dysert is naught but a sly minx with no proper conception as to how she should behave herself and who is, Betty said she dared say, no better than she ought to be.

Whereat I grew much distempered and dressed down my lady Betty to such good purpose that she burst into tears and said I was an ungrateful boy, not worthy of the love so lavishly bestowed upon me by those whose fate it was to have to endure me; that I was shallow and fickle, and ever ready to throw over old and tried friends who have always loved me, for the first rattle-brained pretty-faced, false-hearted, mincing hussy that came in my way.

Which I do protest is most unjust; for when did I ever such a thing or dreamed of doing it? And it took me a good half hour to get on decent terms again with Betty, who for some reason I could not comprehend was sadly put about by what I told her; and she hath ever refused since then, to hear composedly the Lady Dysert's name mentioned even casually; but when it comes to her ears she doth sniff most unbecomingly and disgracefully.

I have not advised with my mother (although it may be I ought to do so, since she hath had a wider life than either Betty or I, she having lived in London in King James's time before she was married to my father); somehow it doth not seem to me that it would be—what shall I say? Expedient? The word will serve as well as another, for in truth I cannot explain to myself even why I do not. As for Nell—I have had no fitting opportunity; and then, she is but a child for all her grand airs of late; and besides, what should she know of such things?



## CHAPTER XX

### HE FIGHTETH A DUEL WITH SIR CHARLES STUART

31st May.

THE morning after the happening in my Lord of Essex his arbor, before I had fairly finished dressing (the which doth require more time in London than at the Mere), a gentleman came to my lodgings saying he was Thomas Holles, Esquire, a brother to my Lady Strafford, and with great and formal politeness represented that he came thither on behalf of Sir Charles Stuart. I had forgotten all about the fat Knight, other things happening soon after my encounter with him to so fill my thoughts as to crowd him out; and was no little puzzled to get at his meaning. So, my wits still a-wool-gathering, I asked, most civilly, in what could I serve his friend Sir Charles?

“You cannot have forgotten, Sir John,” replied Mr. Holles, “that you last night most grossly affronted Sir Charles?”

Then did it flash upon me what he meant; and so droll did the matter seem, that I could not forbear laughing; whereupon Mr. Holles rose, most stately dignified—

“You cannot mean to treat the matter as a jest, sir. That would be a scurvy thing.”

Now, I had no liking for a rap over the knuckles from this fine gentleman.

“Why, look you, Mr. Holles, I shall have to trouble you to go softly and gently in your dealings with me. I am not given to the doing of scurvy things nor to the permitting of such things to be imputed to me, neither. As for the affair with Sir Charles, you may assure him from me that I was not aware of his presence behind me when I was presented to a lady and in making my bow unfortunately thrust him in the paunch with my sheathed sword; I could



have had no notion of offending him since I had not at the moment any knowledge of him. I had never heard of your friend before he addressed me. I am sorry that I disturbed him, and, even though unwitting, as it was, you may say as much to him for me."

"Do you mean, Sir John, that I am to bear your apology to Sir Charles?"

"That is scarcely the term Mr. Holles. I intended no offense to Sir Charles and what I did was wholly an accident to the which I protest he hath given a most preposterous importance, and I say so frankly. I have little liking for this thing called apology and never yet, so far as my memory serves, have had occasion to use the like with any man. You may call it an explanation an it pleases you, and so convey it to him."

"I fear me this will scarcely serve, Sir John. My friend Sir Charles hath a most rare punctilio which, having been affronted by the thrusting of your very long sword into his stomach, must have something more to mollify it than an off-hand explanation given with a most indifferent conceit of the gravity of your offense. I must ask something better than this; if not an apology then the alternative to which gentlemen are used."

By this my gorge was rising at this snipping nagging, and I felt that I must put an end to it. But I was calm and monstrous civil.

"Why then, Mr. Holles, we do not seem to progress to an understanding. Sir Charles complains that I rudely thrust my long sword into his midriff, the sword being in its scabbard and no harm done save to your friend's dignity. I have explained that I had no purpose to do this and that I am sorry that it happened. That ought to be enough for any gentleman even though he do claim to be cousin to the King. But now as it seems this will not suffice I have somewhat to add, videlicet: While I was bowing to a lady yesterday, in the fashion of the day, thrusting my sword behind me as is the custom, your Sir Charles came in my rear and in a manner most uncalled for and



utterly inharmonious to the occasion thrust his great tub of guts against the end of my weapon. I knew it not at the moment but as Sir Charles saith it happened, so it must have been. I have not been aware that I have suffered injury to my feelings up to this moment but as I do now reflect upon it, I perceive that it is most monstrous; and I beg you to convey to him my desire for an instant apology, since he seems to have a fondness for that sort of thing. As to the alternative which you have been so kind as to suggest let me say to Sir Charles through you, that as I am neither a swashbuckler nor walk in the ways of such I can see no cause for proceeding to such an extremity. If he is wise he will accept my explanation and insist upon no more. For I do assure you, Mr. Holles, that if ever through an unseemly and stubborn obstinacy on his part in this matter the end of my sword doth again get within reach of Sir Charles's belly I shall so tickle his insides that he shall rue the day when he presented it, either before or behind me."

"And is that all you have to say, Sir John?"

"Good Heavens, Sir, what more would you have me say?"

"I then am authorized, you having refused to apologize, to ask you to name a friend with whom I may arrange a meeting between you and Sir Charles!"

My amazement was such that I sat speechless for a moment.

"I have seen, Mr. Holles, but few mad men in my time but have heard of many and you and your friend Sir Charles excel in every qualification all I have ever seen or heard of."

And in so saying I spoke intentionally, with most courteous and measured deliberation.

"Sir," cried Mr. Holles in hot dudgeon; "do you mean to affront me, too?" and so comical was it all that I laughed and roared again; the which seemed to serve to make my gentleman only hotter and hotter.

"Nay," I gasped, when finally I got breath; "Nay, I



meant not to affront you. But you are mad, mad as a March hare; and if Sir Charles doth take the view you do there are a pair of you. But I mean no affront; surely it is not regarded in London an affront to tell a man that he is mad?"

With this I opened the door with my politest bow; whereupon Mr. Holles, clapping his hat on his head and scowling most fiercely pounded out of the house and I called for breakfast.

After lounging about the streets buying a few fallals for my mother and my sister Betty (for Mr. Cromwell had told me that the King would doubtless soon dissolve Parliament and that indeed it might happen any day), and returning to my lodgings at about twelve of the clock, I found there a note from Northumberland saying that he would call upon me before two, and asking that I should permit nothing to prevent our meeting since he had a most important matter to discuss with me. I had no wit to imagine what all this might mean but surmising that it could not be much, a matter of some diversion or the like, I dined and throwing myself on a couch fell asleep.

I was aroused from a dream of a pelting of sweet rose-leaves on my lips by some one shaking my shoulder most vigorously, and found Northumberland with me.

"Zounds, man, you slumber soundly for one who standeth in imminent danger of being sent to your last sleep right speedily. Wake up, sir, and look to yourself!"

"Why, now, what's the to-do? Hath the King discovered high treason in me, to be punished by instant decapitation and are you to be the headsman? In faith if I am to lose this poor noddle of mine he could do me no greater favor than to choose you to take it off, my good friend. I should rather be put to death by one I love, than another."

"But this is a serious matter Sir John, and must not be made a jest of. Sir Charles Stuart met me this morning; he told me that you had affronted him yesterday and that



to-day when he sent Mr. Holles to require an apology or a meeting you not only refused both, but even more grossly provoked both him and his envoy. He declares that he will seek you in the most public place possible and there so fasten insult upon you that you will be compelled to fight him; intimating at the same time his belief that all your courage is in fisticuffs and that you have no stomach for a gentleman-like adjustment of the matter between you. Whereupon I made bold to say to Sir Charles that there must be some mistake here; that I was your friend and should not permit your honor as a gentleman to be put upon but that I should advise with you and he should hear from you by four of the clock—and it is now near three. You will have to fight him Sir John, and I regret to say that he is one of the best skilled swordsmen in the Kingdom.”

“Did he detail to you the ground of his complaint against me?”

“Nay, saying only that you had grievously affronted him in the presence of the Lady Dysert yesterday; and yet, though I was there I saw it not nor heard aught of it. He is a testy old curmudgeon with a most exaggerated notion of the respect due him.”

“Why, look you, I am no brawler nor blood-letter by profession but if the man will have it I’ll e’en give him a closer acquaintance. I’m but a lad from the Fens, but I have no fear of your Low Countries swordsman. If I shall not be able to defend myself, aye and to tickle yon fat Knight’s ribs to his satisfaction, too, he shall be welcome to do what he may with me.”

Seeing a look pass over Northumberland’s face which seemed to show he thought I was boasting and feared for me I told him briefly of my training; at which he appeared some little relieved but still anxious. Then I told him of all that had happened, at which he laughed, but nervously.

“It is a great absurdity,” he said; “but you will have to fight him; there’s nothing else for it.”

“Then let it be soon, for I have a fancy the King will



not keep the Parliament much longer and when that dissolves I must get back to the Fens."

"The sooner the better; although I happen to know that the King is minded to give your perverse friends still another week in which to bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and I knew Northumberland spoke by the book, for he hath the King's confidence being of his Council; "how would this evening please you, at say, six of the clock? I shall be your second."

"Nothing better. Do you take charge of everything. I shall remain here in my lodgings and await you."

With that he was gone, leaving me to meditations that grew somewhat heavy and grave as time went on. Still was I not greatly alarmed, but as a precaution wrote a short missive to my father telling him Mr. Cromwell would probably be able to explain that I had gone to my death (if I should die), guiltless of seeking any man's blood, and that I was no licentious brawler; craving his forgiveness for my neglect of duty towards him, and my mother's as well; asking that he distribute my effects among my friends, only that by no means should he give Charley Hedges any of my dogs as his neglect of his own showed that he did not understand how to care for them. I commended to his special love and care little Dorothy, Ruth's daughter, who is exceeding dear to me; left my sword to Will, and this my journal to Betty; and begged their loving remembrance of me to their life's end, and so forth and so forth.

Then, reading prayerfully the XXXVth and XXIIId Psalms, I commended my soul to God and called for food that I might have strength in my time of need. Finishing my meal I inclosed my letter to my father in a short note to Mr. Cromwell, thanking him for his ever constant kindness to me and then arrayed myself in my best attire and sent for my horse Roger.

At five of the clock came Northumberland and with him my Lord Digby, who hath a great delight in these things; and thus setting forth, with two of the King's intimates,



I went to fight with one who is of his party and saith he is cousin to him. But I had and have all faith in Northumberland; a noble youth whose adherence to the King in his rash frowardness is his only fault.

The place chosen is a wood lying well outside the town and in a pleasant part of the valley of the noble Thames, surely the most majestic river in all the world. On our way thither and shortly before we reached the spot, we were joined by Sir Charles, Mr. Holles and others, among whom was a surgeon. These I saluted with all courtesy; the which they returned, but with much wrath smoldering in the eyes of the two former.

When we stripped for the fray I found that Sir Charles was indeed an antagonist to be ware of. He was builded like a Hercules; and, despite his paunchiness, was nimble and quick on his feet. His business-like preparations, methodical and expeditious, were of great interest to me who had never seen a duel fought (while he hath fought many), and won my admiration. At last the moment came and at the word we saluted and fell to it.

I soon saw by the look in his eye that for some reason Sir Charles was minded if not to kill then at least to hurt me badly; and I bore well in mind Phillippe's constant injunction and saved my strength while I studied his fence and strategy. Things went slowly for a time, as it was clear that Sir Charles, too, was minded to have my measure before developing his plans, raw youth that I was. But I had the cooler temperament and greater patience (for a more choleric man I never saw than Sir Charles), and in time I wrought him up to the point where he would have no more shilly-shallying and he came at me full strength and with all his skill, the which I must e'en admit was great.

He pushed me hither and thither like a broken tree in a whirlwind and left me no time to think of any other thing than the matter in hand; and once he gave me a shrewd thrust that sent his blade like a hissing hot iron brand through the skin just under my left arm, as I leaped to



avoid but rather reached his thrust; whereupon I saluted and laughingly congratulated him while I refused to stop to have my hurt looked to for I knew it was nothing grievous. I had no mind to give him time to regain his wind for he was pumping away for breath like a quarter-horse, while I, being not so heavy in flesh and having always kept my bellows in repair by my active life at the Mere was in fine fettle despite the merry dance he led me.

My salute and my shouted congratulation (but it may be my laugh, more than all), set my fat Knight into so fine a rage that I soon had him at my mercy. Threshing about to reach me he ever grew wilder and wilder and more and more careless of his guard and his play; till finally I saw my chance, changed my tactics and pressed furiously and impetuously on him till he was bewildered; then, the proper opening having come, I caught my blade in his hilt, gave the famous twist Phillippe hath taught me till I can even now beat his use of it, and Sir Charles's sword went whirling out of his grasp and he stood defenseless before me.

"Thou art a marvelous consummate swordsman, Sir Charles," I said, saluting with much patronizing gravity; "there are perhaps few better."

He turned purple and spluttered foreign oaths most foully. But his friends led him away.

My hurt, which was nothing, but bled freely, was dressed and we returned to the town; where I thanked God on my knees for His deliverance.



## CHAPTER XXI

### HE IS SORELY TEMPTED BY THE KING; BUT YIELDETH NOT

THE MERE, 3d June, 1640.

I do not think Mr. Cromwell was ill-pleased at the story of my bout with Sir Charles Stuart the news of which he soon had in full (but he got it not from me); he only bent his heavy brows portentously and with a slow gleam of humor in those wonderful, deep eyes, which speak so eloquently when they choose, said dryly—

“So! The Fens cockerel hath been using his long spurs again. Of a truth I must get thee home speedily, if ever I am to get thee there alive! But why let you not a little of Sir Charles’s hot blood when you had the chance?—he hath too much in that great carcass of his, so much that it hath grown heady and rebellious. You had him disarmed and at your mercy.”

“And that was the reason, my Lord of the Fens” (for I was minded to give him a Roland for his Oliver and by that title do we widely know him at home), “that I let him go without harm. An he had held to his weapon, like a man, and had not suffered a mere raw lad to juggle it away from him so easily I might have slit a hole or two in his tense hide; but I could not strike a disarmed man; besides he was in distress enough with his lungs; he breathed like a horse with the heaves hag-ridden and humping for home.”

“When things do come to the pass they promise to reach as I read the omens, Sir Charles may prove a troublesome thorn in the side of God’s Saints for he is a skilful soldier and, they tell me, ever a ready and fierce fighter; it may be therefore, Big John, that thou wouldst have done the



Lord a better service if thou hadst not been over-nice in the small point of chivalry."

"Nay," I replied, "I see it not so; for as I do conceive it if the Lord had intended I should rid the world of the knave He would have helped him keep his sword and so have given me a chance to kill him as a gentleman should. The losing of his sword is to me evidence that the Lord did not intend that his career should come to an end so soon, albeit I can see no use He can have for him in this world—nor, for the matter of that, in the next, neither."

"'Tis not an ill conceit, that of thine, son John," responded Mr. Cromwell, with the air of one pondering; "and it shows a goodly sense of faith in God and a shrewd consciousness of His wise and gracious Providence. And I humbly trust a continuance of His mercies will so order matters that I may get thee back to the Fens with that big body of thine in some reasonable state of wholeness—it is clearly a great undertaking, and one not to be engaged in with only earthly help."

I had not thought to go again to Whitehall, but Northumberland came one day saying that the King commanded my attendance at a matter of a musical diversion wherein some foreign singers were to appear before His Majesty and the Court.

"He hath taken a great liking to thee, Big John," said Northumberland, who is himself of a most sweet and loving nature; and hath, I verily believe, taken me into his inmost heart, as he is in mine, in spite of our wide differences of opinion and he calleth me "Big John" as affectionately as do my dear friends in the Fens. "Aye, a most singular and unaccountable liking, when it is considered that of all the warp-witted, wrong-headed, self-willed, obstinate and unregenerate youth of England thou art doubtless the most outrageously perverse. But there it is; and if thou wouldst but let him he would make thy fortune for thee."

"He puts too high a price upon his favors an I can see aright, my Lord; I cannot pay it. And yet I must



confess that he hath won upon me marvelously and hath ever been kind and over-appreciative of me."

"Nay, he asks me every day for news of you and saith it is a pity so much good manly stuff should be wasted among the enemies of righteous government when a King might make such good use of it to the up-building of the glory of England."

"Have done, my Lord; I'll hear no treason against those principles which are bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh—and if there were ever aught different in my blood, sure your friend Sir Charles let it all out with that hellish hot sword of his a week ago. Come, let us to the music."

Needs not I should say the music was sweet and delicately rendered; nor that the company was fine and polite. To me it was a revelation in many ways of things I had never dreamed of in such wondrous perfection. That which concerned me most was at the close when I was bidden with Northumberland and half a score other gallant gentlemen, and highly placed, to follow His Majesty to his private withdrawing room just off the State bed-chamber; and here were we refreshed with rare wines and cates of the finest. The King was most gracious to me and when I knelt to kiss his hand he twisted his fingers in my curls saying—

"Truly thou art an ill-mannered knave, Sir John, to go forth hence of our audience-room with all thy new-born knightly honors blushing thick upon thee fresh from our hand, and then to fall incontinently upon a loyal gentleman and draw thy sword so late in our hand, upon a member of our House—nay, was it not ill done?"

"Your Majesty, the man so pushed me I e'en had to fight him. I had no wish to it; but there is a limit as your Majesty doth well know beyond which a man may no longer endure."

"Truly there is, Sir John, truly there is, as many shall soon be taught, it may be"; and then he fell into a muse from which none dared recall him. His face was sad and grave and most determined; and yet with a sweetness such



as doubtless Heaven reserves for kings alone. After some little silence he roused himself with a shake, such as a dog doth give when rising from a nap, and looking quickly around, cried—

“But of the fight, Big John, tell us of that, every point and every detail; and yet with discretion, mark you; lest we do send for the headsman to point the finis!” and he smiled with great good-humor.

“I’ll e’en tell it as it was, Your Majesty, with neither addition nor suppression nor any shade of false color, headsman or no headsman; although I like not to recount such things.”

“I’ll engage thou wilt!” chuckled the King.

It must be that His Majesty setteth no great store by his namesake, for he smiled and giggled most boyishly through the most of the story; and fairly roared when I told of the original offense I had so unwittingly given.

“In the bread-basket?” he cried, “dost hear Digby? In the fat bully’s bread-basket. Didst thou see it? I would have given a pretty thing to have been there to see him writhe when thou didst prod that great paunch. Why man, knowest thou not it is his most tenderest point of honor? Nay, never tell me, thou rogue; thou didst do it with deliberate malice prepense and aforethought.”

Then, when at the close I boldly said that every fair-minded man must see my justification, the King replied—

“Thou wert right, thou wert right. That is plain as a pikestaff. But that which doth so sorely perplex our poor comprehension is that thou art so generally in the right and yet when we are in question thou dost go so vilely astray!”

And at that His Majesty opened up the whole question of the state of the Kingdom and so badgered me for replies that while I fain would have evaded answering I was driven to it; and, holding as I do that no man should be ashamed of what he honestly believes, I spoke my mind freely, under his encouragement and sometimes with such bluntness as I marvel at now looking back upon it.



But although I used all my wit and ingenuity I found the King ever ready with his rejoinder; the which I sometimes found it most difficult to meet and dispose of. He made me forget, after we had warmed to the encounter, where we were and who it was I was talking to; showing no bitterness at my sharp thrusts and smiling with sweetest good nature at my most earnest and fiery periods. Meanwhile those about us sat silent and for the most part with a pained and horrified expression; sometimes worse, when hostile looks were bent upon me—but Northumberland's face never lost its assurance of steadfast friendship. Suddenly His Majesty changed the topic.

“Thou art a good man and a true, Sir John, for thou dost believe in thy heart what thou dost believe and will stand to it, aye, even to the peril of thy life, I'll warrant. Thou art most damnably in error in thy views on many things; but thou art honest in thy errors and being a mere youth yet, there is hope that thou wilt soon see these, that they are errors; and when thou dost we dare wager a King's ransom thou'lt be as honest in thy change of front.”

“That will I, Your Majesty. Let any man show me I am wrong and I'll repent and bring forth fruits to show it. But I know I am right; and that no man hath ever lived or shall live who shall satisfy me to the contrary, open as I am to all reasonable argument and persuasion.”

Again the King smiled humorously.

“There should be a strain of Scots blood in thy veins, Sir John, as well as in our own. What grand timber is here for a King's use!” and he looked about at those who were with us as he spoke. “And as we talk of Scots we may say to you that although the ‘Bishops' War’ is ended and its story gone to limbo, yet there is work for good loyal Englishmen over the border, and that presently. These Covenant rebels must be set down; they are a menace to the peace of the realm and as they will not yield to reason they must e'en be brought down by force; and as, again, they are a hard-hitting, valiant people, England must have her best in the field to meet them. My Lord of North-



umberland there will, ere long, if our present purpose holds, have verge and scope for all those high qualities with which Heaven has so bounteously endowed him; for he shall command our army to put down these seditious knaves. We know well he could be better pleased by the company of no other man on earth in that great enterprise, than thyself Sir John; and we could have no more pleasing satisfaction than to know thou wert with him. What say you to the command of a regiment of horse in the army we purpose sending presently to Scotland?"

A regiment of horse! I, John Baldwin of Baldwinsmere, a rude, uncouth lad from the Fens, to be given command of a regiment of horse—nay, asked by the mighty King of England to accept the command! A thing beyond the highest dreams of my ambition. What strange trick was the jade Fortune playing me? I could not have heard aright, I thought, but Northumberland, rushing to my side, threw his arms about my shoulders, crying—

"Oh John, dear John! Thou canst not hesitate to accept this most gracious offer from the most gracious monarch God ever sent to any people!"

And down again went I on my knees to King Charles to kiss his hand and thank him and intending to accept with most grateful homage. But as I was kneeling (and sometimes I think it is no ill-fortune that it takes me longer in getting on my marrow-bones than it does a shorter man) as I was kneeling a sudden thought shot through my mind; and surely it was God who sent it. For I kissed the King's hand it is true and gave him earnest if broken thanks, and the first tears that ever a man made me shed fled down my cheeks as I did so, but—I declined.

And while Northumberland fell back in bewildered surprise and all about me showed blank astonishment, while even the King looked at me with sore amazement I told him (after the thanks which my agitation showed him were sincere and heartfelt) that as an honest man, having a conscience open to God, and fearing that the day would come when to secure those rights for the English



people which God had intended they should have and which the King's mistaken course impelled him to deny the people would be compelled to rise to oppose His Majesty even with force and arms if he should so push them to the extremity, and knowing that in such case my conscience would array me against him, I could not now do that which might bind and fetter me as a free man ought never to be willingly so bound and fettered that he might not give himself freely to that which he felt was right and worthy of the sacrifice of even his life, if need be.

My head sunk as I concluded, I being still on my knees, and feeling such poignant regret that what I had done was the only thing I could honorably do; while I would have given my life if I could have done otherwise; and a silence so profound that the breathing of those present, aye, it seemed even the beating of their hearts could be heard as a rushing, roaring noise, fell like a dense, enshrouding, impenetrable atmosphere upon the chamber. How long it lasted I know not, for I had no wish to raise my head nor to learn of what was passing; till at last I felt the King's hands on my hair, and I thought I heard him sigh; then the hands worked their way slowly under my arms and I felt myself gently raised. I stumbled to my feet and found the King's hands about my neck and his eyes looking into mine. At first they were filled with a look of yearning; but that swiftly passed and then came a fond but roguish gleam—

“Take this fellow away!” he suddenly cried. “Take him away before I make him a peer of the realm!”

When I got my eyes again the King was pacing thoughtfully back and forth across the Chamber, while the company stood about some regarding him and some with their looks fastened on me. They were not all friendly looks, neither. Digby had a sneer upon his face which made me sorry for a fleeting moment that we were in the King's presence. The expression of the others varied from contempt to surprise and even shocked apprehension. Northumberland had turned completely away, and with his back



to me looked out of a window. For a moment I was discomposed and the more so when I looked at the King and suddenly felt for him a tender affection near to that I have for my father, himself; and yielding to the impulse I stepped quickly forward and, again kneeling, cried—

“Sire, do what thou wilt with me, only forgive me.”

“Thou wilt accept?” he quickly asked.

“Nay, Your Majesty, I meant not that. I cannot change as to that. But imprison me, behead me, do anything thou wilt with me, only say that thou wilt forgive me.”

Again he bade me rise, and, with his hand upon my shoulder, said—

“Why yes, we do forgive thee, thou most obstinate of England’s splendid youth. But go! Go quickly, Sir John Baldwin, for by God’s wounds we do love thee too much already!”

As I slowly backed my way out no one joined me and I left the room alone. And I felt alone, and weak, too; I will confess it. And I turned to pace down the long corridor, feeling as if the world had suddenly dropped away from me. I had taken only a step or two however, when a door leading to a room opening into the chamber whence I had come, was opened, a female form glided out, and Lady Dysert stood before me. She held out her hand for me to kiss.

“Sir John, behind the curtains there, with the Queen, I heard and saw all. Remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom, I do beseech thee!”

Instantly all thought of the King and what had just occurred fled from me; and back to me came the memory of the arbor, the swiftly bending lovely woman, the touch as of a rose-leaf, cool, dewy, sweet and fragrant on my lips, and clutching her hand eagerly, I cried—

“Tell me! In the arbor—did I dream it? or did you really——” but with a witching smile, and a swift putting of her finger on her lips the Lady Dysert fled back to the room whence she had just emerged; and as I heard the door shut I surmised it no use to follow. So I made my



way slowly out of the Palace, mounted Roger and rode soberly back to my lodgings.

There I found a note from Mr. Cromwell begging me most courteously to favor him with my presence so soon as I might be able to meet his wish; and to him I went.

On the way I debated in my mind whether I had better tell him of what had that day happened to me. So far, I had confided in him everything of importance that had befallen me; but now I hesitated. There was, or I felt so, a sacredness about this thing which made it different from any that had gone before; and besides, it seemed to me, the story would not sound well from my lips. And so I told him nothing of it; nor have I said aught of it to any other; it is writ here in this, my journal, and unless my present purpose doth marvelously change the grandson who doth come mousing here some day and light upon the story will be the first to have it from me. And by that time I shall be dead and gone.

There are some things that may happen to a man, concerning which he ought not to talk to any one.

Mr. Cromwell told me that he had information that on the next day, the 5th of May, (last month) the King purposed to dissolve the Parliament. Many pressing reasons made it necessary, Mr. Cromwell said, that we should lose no time after the dissolution in leaving London.

And as he said so it fell out. The King dissolved the Parliament on the 5th, and on the morning of the 6th Mr. Cromwell and I left London.

Shall I ever see Great Babylon again?



## CHAPTER XXII

### HE RETURNETH TO THE FENS IN GREAT HONOR

10th June.

WHEN I last left off with this endless history Mr. Cromwell and I were just setting forth from London. Our journey was tedious because of his pre-occupation of mind which he did but once shake off to discourse to me of how evidently and surely God's hand is leading the English people to the securing of their liberties. This I could not at first follow as it seemed to me the King had signally triumphed and punished the Parliament for having refused the twelve subsidies, in that he had dissolved it and sent its members packing to their homes. But Mr. Cromwell soon showed me most convincingly that the advantage was really with the Parliament which, by maintaining a bold front for the protection of the people's rights and showing that the King could not break the Parliament to his will, gave evidence of great firmness, whereby the people would be encouraged to continue the struggle and the great cause would thus be strengthened.

He professed his faith to be stronger than ever in the ultimate triumph of God and His people though he doth clearly look to see an open rupture between them and the King, with, perhaps, much bloodshed; at which while he doth not shrink neither doth he falter yet doth he grieve with sad forebodings of the private sorrow and suffering which must come upon many.

He talked like an inspired Prophet of God, exultant at the good that shall come to His people, fierce and unsparing in his denunciations of those who would wrong and oppress them, mourning, but with a godly pride, over the trials the Saints must endure, and yet constantly praising His Holy Name for His mercies.



If I should criticize Mr. Cromwell in any way it should be for that he seems so willing at all times to defer his own judgment to that of the Almighty, which doth seem to me to savor somewhat of an unworthy distrust of the faculties which God hath given him and all of us of the Elect. When I said so much to him he looked intently upon me for a moment and then said: "Thou art a good apple grown upon a goodly tree; and when the operations of time and nature shall have mellowed thee, thou shalt be fit to go upon a king's table, for thou art full of most excellent juices and sound at heart; but Heaven forbid thou shouldst be eaten now. The sweetness in thee needs time to ripen, it being now not properly mollified, and is more like to produce a colic than the nourishment it shall furnish forth later."

The which soundeth to me as though, wise man as he is, and careful of his speech, he hath left something out. But he means well; that I know; and it is enough.

Truly this is a small world and in these days of frequent posts intelligence doth fly swiftly to remote parts. It seems that, although I had written home but once (and that to my mother, to apprise her of the state of my health) the news of my doings (and some of which I would better have liked untold) had traveled not only to the Mere but over the whole of the Fen country as well; for, reaching Ely, we came upon a fine array of horsemen headed by my brother Will, Tom Templeton and Charley Hedges, and comprising nearly every old chum and playfellow I had ever loved and threshed, gathered to escort me home, forsooth! A foolish prank.

When we came in sight of them such a mighty cheer went up as might have made the heart of the Lord Mayor himself swell with joy. And indeed I thought at first it was in honor of Mr. Cromwell, the horsemen being some distance away and not individually to be distinguished; and I added my congratulations. But Mr. Cromwell, looking more closely said he thought perhaps it might be some one else who had found a way to the hearts of good



friends; and soon I knew it, too, for on they came at full gallop charging down upon us, and shouting—

“The Knight of the Fens! Sir John of the Mere!” and more of the same sort.

Mr. Cromwell I do believe was better pleased to see me honored than he would have been at hearing his own deeds praised; and would have nothing less than that all should have entertainment and refreshment at his hands—there being some fifteen or twenty. And so it was; and in his good ale was my health most heartily drunk, to be followed by toasts, and an address by Mr. Cromwell himself, in which he showed such great knowledge of my bout with Bully Ben and my affair with Sir Charles Stuart that I was fair amazed, wondering where he got it all; for surely he knew a hundred times more than I had told him and some that I had forgot; for he hath a marvelous memory.

Turning from my affairs, after he had bestowed upon them a thousand times more attention than they or I deserve he spoke of the state of the Kingdom, and gave a brief account of the struggle of the Parliament with the King, winding up with a most stirring appeal that all should be prepared for the great day so soon, in his judgment, at hand, when the people would have to meet the King on the stern field of battle for their rights. He spoke most boldly and fearlessly and was fairly eloquent; showing that God would be with us since we were fighting, or would be, for that right of conscience which is the backbone of His one and only true religion.

Then home I rode with this wild mob of true and warm-hearted friends, who testified so sensibly and in so many ways their regard for me, and their pride in the things that had happened to me in London that, truly, I was most deeply touched. Only I had to put a stop to the “Sir Johning” of me; for every man-jack of them all seemed to roll my title as a sweet morsel under his tongue and showed a pretty ingenuity in the devising of pretexts to make use of it. At the last I called a halt, after having vainly protested against their flattering appreciation and



gathering them about me gave them to understand that to my old friends I hoped ever to remain Big John and by my old friends I desired to be always so called; and when they made as if they would not have it so I told them, very civilly, that they would offend me if they did not meet my wish in the matter and that if any one of them should address me as Sir John again he should feel the weight of Big John Baldwin's fist, Knight or no Knight.

When we rode up to the great door of the Mere there were my mother and my sister Betty and my father, waiting to welcome me; and back of them stood many others whom I had no time to see until I had knelt for my mother's blessing and had been taken into her arms. She was weeping with joy and trembling with happiness; while Betty, all smiles and tears like a day in April and far more daft than I had ever seen her, scarce gave my mother time to kiss me more than a dozen times and murmur things in my ears which were like the cooing of a dove before she came plunging down on my neck like the falling in of the side of the house. And so, while they were pulling and hauling at me and dampening my fine new coat and fixings with their tears my father was standing by, patiently waiting (with a lame pretense of unconcern but looking monstrous fine and stately) for an opening to say a word to me. At last he cleared his throat with a most prodigious "Ahem!"

"Permit me, Lady Nancy," he said, most dignified, "to suggest that you leave enough of the distinguished personage you and Betty are mauling about and dampening down for his father to hold a 'quest on to make inquiry and mayhap establish his identity." whereat my mother crying: "O William!" threw her arm around his neck and pulling his dear old head down, kissed him most lovingly on the lips.

"Why, now," said my father, "here again do I marvel, with a thankful heart, at the inexhaustible bounty of our God; for after all thou hast wasted on yon great cub thou still hast a kiss for thine unworthy husband, as fresh and



sweet as the first I ever won from the fairest lips in Christendom. Shall I tell when and where it was?" But my mother blushed gently, and put her hand over his pursing lips. "Ah well, then, let it go. But it is a marvel where you get them all."

Turning to me he drew himself up most stately and severe—but his eyes were shining—

"Welcome, Sir John, to the Mere! You do us great honor to leave the delights of the society of Bully Ben, Sir Charles Stuart and the frequenters of the chaste tap-rooms of London, to say nothing of that other Charles Stuart who is the King, to bestow the favor of your august presence upon the humble folk who live beneath this poor roof. But you are welcome, and if you find us dull Sir John, you may not doubt our love; and if the poverty of our entertainment falls so far below that to which you have grown used, we beseech thy kindly consideration for that we have neither wit nor means but all the heart in the world, to do better. Again, Sir John, thou art welcome!"

His kind old hand was gripping mine with a warmth of affection he had never shown before; and do and say what he would it was plain that he was pleased—so pleased that I felt abashed.

"Father! Father! I'm more glad than I have words to say to be once more back to the Mere and find you in such fine fettle. You never looked to be in better health."

"Aye, well enough. You are, Sir John, I live the plain, quiet, uneventful and tranquil life of a country gentleman; a healthy life, but which will, I fear, seem but slow and tasteless to a King's favorite fresh from the refined and exciting pleasures and polished society of London. But we do crave your kindly allowance——"

"For Heaven's sake, have done, father. And if thou dost love me, let me hear no more of 'Sir John' from your lips."

"Nay, nay, I am a loyal subject of England's King and shall ever reverence and admire a Knight of his crea-



tion, I hope." Then swiftly changing his tone he spoke sharply and proudly—"But do thou never forget, sirrah, that Almighty God made thee a Baldwin, ere ever Charles Stuart made thee a Knight."

Then came pressing forward Sir Godfrey and Sir Charles, leading me in with warm congratulations to the Lady Priscilla and the Lady Helen who, with the delightful and gracious freedom of the dearest old friends in all the world welcomed me as they would have greeted their own sons, returned safe, victorious and covered with honor and credit, from a great war.

With what thankfulness and sincerity should and do I acknowledge the goodness of God in having cast my lines in such pleasant places and filled my hand with such stanch and in every way admirable, loving, loyal friends. Who am I that He hath so blest me?

Mistress Eleanor Hedges, standing near by with a monstrous fine gown and most bewitching fal-lals to her attire received me with the most elaborate and stately courtesy it hath ever been my fortune to see. How she did it passeth my poor wit to conceive; but she sank to the floor in a majestical swirl of petticoats which took up the room of a hay-stack, out of which rose her lithe body and her saucy, little golden head, like a crocus just peeping forth at the Spring, while her blue eyes were most demurely cast down and so held, her pretty mouth quivering with a vain attempt to look sedate. Not to be outdone I gave her the very best that my Lord Northumberland had taught me, with such a sweep forward and down and then up and backward that the great hall had scarcely room to contain it; then falling on my knee (the right one) I pressed her fingers to my lips with what began as an affectation of great tenderness but which swiftly became a plaguey nervousness as the old thrill shot through me once again.

"You will permit me the honor to welcome you to the Fen country, Sir John?"

"That was a mighty fine courtesy, Nell."



"You exaggerate most kindly, sir. 'Tis as well as a country maid can learn to do; but not to be compared with what you fine beaux of the Court are wont to witness, I am sure."

"Never saw I anywhere a finer."

"Your condescension is so flattering it overwhelms me! Pray remember I'm but a country lass unused to the compliments of the Court—I would not have my head turned by well-meant but alas, dangerous gallantry. In comparison with your bow my courtesy hath so little merit that I protest I am fit to sink with shame."

"Nell! Nell! Have done! It is not fair to thus make sport of your old playmate. Have I not caught birds for thee, aye, by the orchard-full"—

"And how left you the Queen, Sir John? In tears?"

"Indeed I saw not the Queen, at all."

"And the Lady Carlisle? It is said that since you have been in London her affection for Mr. Pym has greatly cooled."

"Nell! How is the setter-pup I gave you? Is he not a well-trained dog?"

"What have setter-pups to do with affairs of the heart between the Knight of the Fens and august personages? But since you are kind enough to ask—and I wonder that you can bring your mind to such trifles—I am glad to assure you that Dancer is doing well, barring too much length of limb and a distressful awkwardness of manner the which he seems to have caught from one who once owned him. He is a vile dog, for he chewed up my new braided dog-whip, only yesterday. And you say you left the Queen inconsolable?"

"He is a wise dog, in his generation, is Dancer. If I were a dog and had a mistress for a master I'd e'en diet myself on her dog-whips so long as she cared to provide them."

"Aye, London must be a dull and empty place now that you have come to the Fens."

"Nell, they have a new style in lap-dogs in London"—



"And in Knights, too, I'm told."

"You should have one"—

"A lap-dog or a Knight? A thousand thanks, Sir John, but I have no use for either—of the new style."

"The new lap-dog is white and hath long, silky hair"—

"And the new Knight is red, and hath long, lean legs."

"The new lap-dog is most amiable, except when"—

"And the new Knight is most stupid, except when"—

"When he is teased, and then"—

"Except when he bows to a lady and then he is rude to any of whom he is jealous. In truth"—

"He bites most viciously."

"He goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he"—

"Nell! Nell! Have you no word of real welcome for me?"

"John, I am truly most delighted that you are back again. I do mean it when I say it and I have missed you more than you will believe. You are really the only pup-trainer worthy of the name—nay, I'll not tease you any more. Come back, and read me my riddle, or whatever you may call it. I've a new one, and of my own making, too."

"I know you did not mean it—but somehow Nell, your teasing hurts me more than that of any one else."

"Does it John? Why?"

"I know not, but it does. But what is your riddle?"

"Aye, I had forgot. Why is the new style in lap-dogs unlike the new style in Knights?"

"Nell, you are outrageous. I *will* leave you now—this is too much."

"O John! John! You know I didn't mean it. Come back, and I'll promise, indeed I will, not to tease you any more."

She looked so pleading and distressful (for I had got up in a real dudgeon) that my heart smote me and I went back and sat down again by her side.

"Forgive me, Nell! I'm nothing but a great, overgrown, uncouth brute."

"I meant no harm, I do assure you."



"I know you did not—why, my old playmate, you are not capable of meaning harm to any"—

She looked almost tearful and I was feeling much depressed over my foolish sensitiveness.

"John, how could you think so even for a moment?"

"I cannot conceive, Nell, how I could be so stupid. Forgive me."

"What should make you angry in the suggestion that the new Knight is unlike a lap-dog? Would it please you to turn it t'other way about? I'll do anything to please Your Worship. Have it so then."

And with a teasing laugh the little vixen was up and gone, leaving me sitting alone, hot and angry with myself for the stupidest ass that ever was known.

Back she presently came with my sister Betty.

"Betty, why should a Knight be offended when he is told that he is unlike a lap-dog?"

"Why, now, crazy Nell, what does this mean?"

"Well, to put it plainly, what qualities have lap-dogs that Knights should be anxious to have attributed to them?"

"I saw Lord Lovering at Whitehall one day, Nell," I cried, to change the subject and relieve Betty's bewilderment, poor girl. "He was monstrous civil to me and begged I would carry his compliments to Mithstreth Eleanor Hedgeth, if you know such a person."

"And who is Lord Lovering, pray?"

"Why," cried Betty, "he visited you last year, Nell; you cannot have forgot him."

"O yes, I recall him now. That dawdling, lipping ninny, who nearly wearied the life out of me with his vapid speeches and the vile essences on his 'kerchief. Why do all men become ninnies and use scents when they go to Court? Sir John, please send your 'kerchief out o'doors, or I protest I'll faint."



## CHAPTER XXIII

### HE RIDETH WITH RUPERT

BALDWINSHERE, 27th August, 1642.

THE issue is joined, the die is cast, and Charles Stuart will rather risk all he hath than surrender to the English people the rights to which they hold title from the Great Jehovah; and the English people have appealed unto that just God; and have bound themselves to His cause and are preparing to go forth to fight His and their own battles. At Nottingham the King hath set up his standard, and rallies to it those who, seeking personal fortune only and the good things of this world alone, and to whom the right of the people to worship God as their free consciences may lead them and to protect themselves from the swelling pride and devouring rapacity of royal rulers and parasites hath no weight nor sacredness, find their purposes promised best advantage in maintaining those evil conditions which have kept England in a ferment for these many years.

Not that I utterly condemn Charles Stuart; for well do I know he is a man kindly disposed and of a loving and sweet nature; but he is ill advised by those who find their profit in leading him astray; he is under the influence of the Queen who is the willing tool of the Anti-Christ, the ruthless Pope of Rome, who seeks to fasten again upon this people the hateful yoke of his domination, bending their consciences to the destruction of all godly and true religion in the following of those idolatries and superstitions by which he holds in thrall the ignorant and misguided of other lands. He is himself, I am persuaded, at heart of the Protestant faith, but is led by his love-locks as Samson was fooled to his undoing by Delilah; besides which he was born with the belief that Kings were sent to rule and



that all other people were created to be ruled and that the ruled should have no voice nor part in their own government but should bow in all things to the King and gratefully accept from him whatever he may deign to grant, as they would take from the hand of God what He in His loving wisdom doth choose to bestow.

And so is the issue joined. Charles and his agents busy themselves throughout the Kingdom with dreadful preparations for a supreme effort against God and His people, and the people are girding on sword and buckler to go up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

From that which doth appear the King will have about him a strong and mighty army to meet the array which the Parliament, as God's chosen and visible instrument, shall be able to bring up against him. He hath doubtless with him the most of those who have by service in the Low Countries and elsewhere become trained soldiers and skilled warriors, as would naturally be; and those of the nobility and gentry who fear in his defeat the loss of their own prestige, power and possessions, are rallying their retainers, dependents and adherents, and drawing with them the adventurous spirits who, having of themselves no standard of principle, do join themselves to that which hath most glittering promise—(and what hath the cause of the people to offer to such, save that which comes to all equally?)—and these, with accretions from the idle and thoughtless and time-serving, whom mere showiness attracts and who can give no reason for their adhesion save that they always follow and truckle to power, and those who, learned and scholarly though they may be, nay, it may happen because they *are* learned in the lore of schools can find no rest for themselves nor promise of future security save in that which hath been long established, preferring it because of its hoary age even though unjust and oppressive—these will make up his host. And it will be one to be not lightly despised.

On the other hand the forces of the Parliament will not be without skillful and experienced soldiers. If Charles



hath his Palatine Prince, Rupert, the Parliament hath Essex. For not all of the nobility have gone after the King in his departure from the laws of the One True God, praised be His Holy Name. We have here in England those of highest rank who are ready to lay down all they have and yield it up in His service, although the most of them are not so. But in that great body of the gentry, of that yeomanry which is the saving salt of this mighty and free people and of those who, engaged in useful pursuits for their livelihood are the shrewdest observers and truest thinkers, the Parliament hath a multitude from which to draw to fight its and Jehovah's battles.

And of the end of this nothing but the eye of faith may see; but to that the outcome is assured and glorious. As God hath led His people beforetime, as on many occasions He hath bared His arm and made His sword to flash for the salvation and preservation of His people so, just so surely as He liveth and reigneth will He in this day lead His people to victory. And as the glowing tints in the East do herald the rising of the god of day, so we, who see by faith, discern in the dimness of the dark hour before the dawn the glint and gleam of the dyed garments from Bozrah which light up the pathway of the swiftly rising Sun of Righteousness; and soon will the beams of His bright shining flood all this goodly land, the heritage of His Saints and, warming and vivifying the seeds of civil and religious liberty here sown in weakness and with tears, shall, by its fructifying grace bring forth His precious harvest in power and might for the feeding and nourishing of all peoples who may dwell upon the earth, in all time to come. Aye, the seal and assurance of triumph is ours blazoned upon our banners and burning in our hearts, for He is with us; and if God be for us who shall be against us?

The men whom I have been collecting and drilling and preparing for that which is, most clearly, coming, are godly men; and with great sacrifice are ready to go forth when summoned; and that that summons may soon come I have



this day been certified by Mr. Cromwell in a letter brought by special messenger; in the which he doth apprise me that the time is at hand, that the rendezvous shall be at Huntingdon, that meantime I shall, with the assistance of Captain Dalbier (who, though too old for the harder service, still hath skill and knowledge gained in the Low Countries, and is a godly and a righteous man) have daily meetings for their exercising in drilling and marching, and the use of their arms, and lessons as to the care of themselves and their horses in camp and on the campaign; and hold all things in readiness for instant and prompt response to the order to take the field, Mr. Cromwell to be Captain, and he insisting that I shall be the Cornet of the Troop, with the assurance that I shall rise higher when the place shall open for such promotion.

I am in all willingness to serve either as common soldier or as officer, or indeed anywhere they shall put me, my only care and prayer being that I shall be permitted to serve. The training I had with Mr. Anstruthers while in London two years ago hath stood me in good stead and I have learned much more from Captain Dalbier. I can fight, any way, and esteem it a higher privilege to be even the lowest in this, God's Army, than would I to rank the highest in the Army of the King; for of a truth it is better to be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.

And truly I do believe the men I have thus gathered will give a good account of themselves when the opportunity shall serve albeit much must still be done with them to perfect them for their work; for they are all stout fellows and without physical blemish, whom I tested and tried to prove their courage and hardihood; no tipplers, nor lewd, nor dissolute, but having the fear of God before their eyes and their hearts deeply engaged in the cause; and to this last particular was I most carefully enjoined by Mr. Cromwell.

"We want," he saith, "no old decayed serving men, tapsters, licentious nor brawling bullies; we shall find our-



selves over against gentlemen's sons, younger sons, persons of quality, who will go far, endure faithfully and fight valiantly from the very pride of the vain spirit that is in them; opposing such as these, base, mean fellows will never be able to prevail; so let your recruits be honest and godly, which I may by no power of words too strongly insist upon; for in such men, having God's business soberly at heart, and of a mind that they shall give their lives if need be to the ensuing thereof, shall we raise up the Lord's hosts; and they shall win His victories so surely as they do put their trust in Him. To the which I do urge also you, Sir John, in all loving regard, having you often in my prayers to God to that end."

The summons for immediate preparation to readiness having been sent forth, and persuaded that any hour may bring the order to march, I felt that one thing of great importance yet remained as concerning myself that should speedily be looked to; and giving due and proper attention to my attire that it might be fitting and not lacking in harmony with the purpose I had in view, I took my way to Hedge Hall to ask audience of Mistress Eleanor; for, having become a man, I have learned to know that I love her most deeply and fondly; and (although I have wrestled in prayer with the matter, fearing it might be a snare of the Evil One to so think) I am fully persuaded that without her, and her love responding in due measure (and equal) to mine, there can be no joy nor satisfaction in this life for me.

How mighty are the wonders of our God, and how mysteriously doth He go about the doing and perfecting of them! So long had I known Nell (for she hath always been a part of my world) and so friendly and frank had our intercourse ever been that it had never been my thought that I should love her as a man doth once in his life love one woman, better than all else and every one beside, and with a power of affection only less than he hath for God Himself; and yet the chains, as I do look at it now, must surely have been about me all my life, and I unwitting of



it. Ever since she was the merest mite of a being—(and she is not so large but that even now I can carry her about on my arm I do believe lightly and easily as a mother doth a babe)—she hath seemed to use me at her will to do and act and think as she would have me. And in her company there was ever with me a sense of deep devotion that made of her something sacred in my eyes; and that too, whatever her mood, whether gentle and gracious, kind and thoughtful or cold and indifferent, teasing and scornful or cruelly sarcastic—(for she hath given me all the sides of her tongue and it is a marvel how so small a member can have so many)—it was ever the same; there hath always been about her that which did enshrine her as something to look reverently upon and thank God for, if not to worship—but that would be idolatry.

And yet I never knew I loved her till the day, three months ago, that Prince Rupert came riding hither with a gay following of gallant gentlemen, and spent the night at Hedge Hall. (It hath been borne in upon me that King Charles hath thought doubtless Sir Charles Hedges might be won over to his side—and I must confess that we of the true following have been fearful of him at times—and if he did so think it was a shrewd thing to send Rupert hither to honor his house.) Sir Charles sent to bid us all to a splendid banquet and entertainment he had set for the Prince and his suite, and we went, as in duty bound.

The Prince is a most engaging youth, of charming bearing, handsome, open, frank and gallant face, and of strikingly well formed and proportioned figure, which is tall, being all of six feet, leaving him still nearly six inches below my height. He is two or three years my senior; and his eye is like that of a hawk. He is fond of all manly exercises and doth greatly excel in them; there are few who can stand before him in any of them. Withal he is most amiable and where he attracts doth usually respond to the affection he creates, in all ingenuous sincerity. In the dance and the graces of the boudoir and



withdrawing room he hath no equal, so it is said, and so I believe. Add to all these the polish of all the finest Courts in Christendom, the fact that he is the King's own sister's son, is as brave and chivalrous as he is handsome and accomplished, and you have the picture of the most debonair Prince of the age.

Sir Charles's entertainment was perfection; for in his day he was a noted figure at James's Court and had much experience in his youth at those of France and Spain and it was a pride to me that the Prince should see that it was not only at Whitehall that English hospitality and entertainment is nigh to the perfection of the art, and that an English gentleman need not be a King to know how things should be done.

It is the privilege of princes to love every pretty maid (or matron either, for that matter, I have heard,) whom they may meet; and such is the magic of the station that doth glorify them whether they be handsome and good or homely and bad that women, who are for the most part but weak, foolish creatures (save those like my mother, my sister Betty, Nell and her mother and the Lady Helen Templeton) are all too prone to feel a passion for them and to give and yield their hearts upon little or no occasion to princely free-booters without so much as an effort at a struggle to withhold them. Out of this may have grown the habit which many princes have of treating women as of but small value (falling so easily, they must lose in true and gallant appreciation); and to this as well is doubtless also due the greater attraction that one who holds herself with dignified aloofness if not coquettish challenge towards them, has for them; when they meet such a one they are wrought up at once to an ardor of pursuit that would usually seem diverting to the beholder if it were not for the danger to the poor quarry so hotly chased.

Now Mistress Eleanor Hedges hath a very proper sense of her own dignity and worth—(though not nearly so high as her merits do deserve)—and doth hold herself with much reserve to most; which is a thing that hath grown upon



her greatly during the past two years and is ever a piquant delight to me; and when Prince Rupert saw that she was minded to give him but fair and courteous favor such as is any gentleman's due but no more, he seemed to feel that he was challenged to show forth his powers of captivation. He gave himself the extremest pains to testify in every conceivable way the most ardent and yet chivalrous and worshipful regard for her; the which making but little impression upon Mistress Eleanor, who was as coolly indifferent as politeness and hospitality would permit, the Prince betrayed an increase of warmth scarcely imaginable, to the neglect at last of every one else present, and the complete monopolizing of the young lady; a thing which was unbecoming in any gentleman and which, to me, had no excuse in any sort of breeding. I got not so much as a word with her the whole evening.

For a long time Nell held out and I was beginning to enjoy the young man's discomfiture even to the passing away of my resentment that she was kept so completely beyond my reach. I was in this frame of mind when Nell gave me a glance, well understood between us, the meaning of which was clearly that for one reason or another she desired my intervention. I was, however, minded not to interfere with the lesson she was giving the Prince; and so let things go, affecting not to be aware of her wish. Presently the signal was repeated, but with the same lack of effect. At this Mistress Eleanor looked at me for an instant, across the room, with an expression of surprise and perhaps a little pique. Then she turned back to Rupert, and from that moment his suit appeared so to prosper that Sir Charles, who up to that time had seemed, in spite of all endeavors, to be ill at ease, became at once most beamingly patronizing to all his guests, and, as things went on, puffed and swelled most prodigious. I felt it a neighborly duty to feel ashamed of him, and accordingly was.

The hour grew late and everybody gave signs of weariness save the Prince, Mistress Eleanor and her father. The



two sat partly concealed by the hangings in an alcove, and the moon poured in enough light to show Nell the most gloriously beautiful woman in all the world. They talked in tones so low and tender that none could hear aught of their discourse; the which, however, it was fair to conclude by their actions, was most pleasant and delightful to themselves; their looks were in most bold and unabashed harmony with the tenderness of their voices, and their eyes said much, with a recklessness that I then felt was downright shameless.

It was late when at last we got leave to return home. To my good-night Nell (who in turn would then recognize no signal of mine) gave me her most elegant courtesy, from which on rising, she shot me a look most puzzlingly like defiance; the which I had no desire to return in kind.

Rising betimes I rode to the Hall to go a decent distance with the Prince, setting him forth on his way, as was my duty and pleasure. Having a long journey before them the party breakfasted before the dawn and the sun was just topping the tall trees when they set out, gay and gallant. The Lady Priscilla came forth with Sir Charles to speed the parting guest, and Charley was mounted to also ride with him; but Nell was nowhere to be seen. The Prince lingered o'er long, I thought, with trifling matters which need not have properly delayed him; and took little pains to dissemble his frequent glances toward the windows of her room, and by an unaccountable inspiration it came to me that he wished one more look into Nell's eyes before he took up his journey—such is the presuming boldness bred in princes by their high fortunes.

“I trust, Sir Charles,” said Rupert, at last, “that the fair Mistress Eleanor is not ill in health this morning?”

“Nothing more, your Highness, than a headache or some such whimsy, the like of which doth often seize upon a maid to excuse late lying abed. She made this as an excuse, by her woman, for not appearing to breakfast with your Highness.”

“Truly I would be grieved”—— began the Prince, when



Nell's casement window swung open, and she stepped through to the balcony; and on my soul, if to be ill doth make a maid look as fair as did she I wonder they ever leave their beds.

The Prince is a horseman of distinction and caused his steed to caracole most spiritedly, as he swept his saddle-bow with his glistening curls, in salutation.

"'Tis Aurora, herself!" he cried; "and now at last hath the day dawned, having lingered for the goddess and her approval! We but lacked the auspicious assurance of thy smile to send us on our way with blithe hope in our hearts."

"Indeed, sir," replied Nell; "thou shalt go with the sincerest wish from Eleanor Hedges for a happy and prosperous journey, not only this day, but through all thy life."

While she spoke with all proper civility, yet did her tone not seem to me to have much tinge of warmth. The Prince bowed low again and every plumed hat in all the cavalcade waved most bravely the parting salute while Nell gave herself once more to the performance of that wondrous courtesy of hers; rising from which she first seemed aware of my presence. Her eyes rested softly on me for an instant and then changing her look for one of seeming weariness and cold indifference (the Prince and his following having, by this, their backs to the Hall) she said—

"You ride early My Lord of the Long Legs."

"Throw me a kiss, Nell, to hearten me up," I begged. "I ride with a heavy heart this morning."

"Indeed? What sad happening hath cast thee down? Hath a strange dog whipped thy new mastiff? 'Tis a cruel world where such calamity may fall upon so noble a youth. As for thy request, it is impertinent; and overbold. My kisses are reserved to be thrown to thy betters, Blundering John."

"Nell, truly, my heart is heavy. It hath been since last night"—

"Why then you over-ate, doubtless. My mother will



give thee a specific from her physic-box that shall set that precious heart of thine right again."

"Nell, Nell, do not jest with me. I slept not, all night. I have something to say to thee—I must say it"—

"For Heaven's sake, at least bawl it not out on the King's highway. You have an indigestion—naught else troubles you, believe me. The Prince is leaving you behind—to your duty, sir!"

"And hath he left your heart behind? Oh, Nell, throw me just a kiss to show that he carries it not with him."

"Why, now, I'll do no such foolish thing. What business may it be of yours if he ride away with my heart? If it do concern you greatly, however, you have my consent to overtake him and demand it back; aye, if he will not yield it up, why may you not take it from him by force, or anything else of mine he hath? You are big enough." And with this, which was delivered with an air of most languid indifference my lady re-entered and closed her casement and I perforce struck spurs to my horse and was off. And truly my heart was heavy—it was no jest.

Just as I wheeled about the lilac clump to take the cross-cut to catch the Prince, who, with his party, was riding like the wind and had already gone a goodly distance, I glanced back; and my heart stood still as I saw, or thought I saw, through the window the wave of Nell's hand from her lips and towards me. I was not sure, but on the chance I waved my hat, and caused Roger to bound and plunge most gallantly.

In the confusion of the Prince's going no heed was given to Nell and me, and no one heard us. As I rode I recalled that she had spoken most softly, as if she would not be heard; and this for a time, comforted me not a little; for I argued that if she cared not for me she would as lieve the whole world heard what she said to me. But as I went further on and recalled everything more clearly—her dalliance with the Prince the night before, the manner of which was so different from aught she had ever shown to me, her refusal to permit me to speak to her privately



before I left the Hall for the night, her air of indifference towards me when I spoke with her in the morning, her refusal to throw me a kiss (which she hath done a thousand times before), her failure to deny that Rupert was truly riding away with her heart in his keeping—nay, did not her fleeing, sorry defiance to me to go after and take it from him evidence the truth that my fear was well-grounded?—did not everything go to show that she loved me not?

And indeed why should she care for me any more than for Tom Templeton, or Jack Hawkins, or Dumpy Dobson, or any other one of the youth of the country-side, whom she knows almost as well as she knows me? Aye, and was it not, sans doubt, because she knew me so well for a great, awkward, stupid lout, in no way worthy of the least of her thoughts, that she did not care for me, as (I had learned as by a flash of lightning to know) she must care for me or I should be of all men the most unhappiest?

Nay, it was my own foolish, egotistical conceit of myself that made me fancy I saw her kiss her hand to me at the casement window—that same intolerable vanity which gave me courage to dare to think I might ever hope that she might ever care for me.

And with it all I could but marvel that, whereas if but yesterday one had said (my sister Betty, for example) that Nell might some day make me a good and loving wife, I had beyond question received the suggestion with complacent acceptance of the evident possibility of such a thing, and with no feeling either of exultation or any particular desire that she might, now, and all at once, I was filled with a madness of hope and fear as to whether she might deem me worthy of toleration of any kind. I felt that never again could I enter her presence or be with her on the old terms as to the state of my own mind; that all was changed and I should never be at ease again with her so long as I feared so mightily as to what footing I had with her—and indeed so it hath been ever since until to-day.



Catching up at last with Prince Rupert and his escort I rode by his side for an hour or more, and found him as lovable and genial a companion as his uncle, the King. We talked of nearly everything save the troubles of the times; he seemed greatly interested in the matter of the draining of the Fens and asked many questions thereupon; with shrewd comments upon the differences between the nature of the task here and that of the people of the Low Countries, who have ever to fight back the sea from their doors; and at every path and road and lane and highway he was full of curiosity to know whither it led, and what were the distances between villages as well as gentlemen's seats, and the lay of the country, and of its fertility, products and resources. And it was pleasing to me to have him show such intelligent interest, for there is no other spot under Heaven to compare with the Fen country; and I filled him full of all he wished to know.

When we came to part (by this we were in the rear, he having desired his people to ride on that we might have more ease in our discourse) he drew from his finger a great ring bearing a precious stone of green carved to the semblance of a falcon proudly sweeping to his prey, and bade me keep it in memory of one who loved me much. I was touched and assured him that I should ever cherish the thought of his kindness; that it was a matter of not unworthy pride to know that I had gained the regard of a cavalier so gallant and true and of such fame throughout all Christendom.

He regarded me most intently for an instant and then clasping my hand with gracious warmth of feeling his eyes went deep into mine as he asked me, frankly and gently—

“Sir John, wilt thou not come with me to fight for the King?”

“Nay,” I replied; “that may I not do, albeit I would be proud and glad to follow thee in another cause. But my heart and soul are pledged to the other way.”

“Yes! Yes!” he answered gravely; “I know! My



uncle, the King, hath spoken of you to me; do you know he hath a great and singular love for you? I have found you what he said you were. I thought I might win you but he warned me, even while he bade me try, that I might e'en as well hope to pluck the sun from the sky as to dream to lure you away from that which, in your heart, you held as a sacred duty."

"Aye, your Highness. It is even so, though it may be it soundeth better from His Majesty's lips than from mine."

He looked in my face musingly for a moment; then with a swift stretching forth of his hand he clasped mine again, crying—

"Why, farewell then! It hath been a pleasure to be comrade with thee if only for a day! We may meet again, and in battle, too; and if we do, I shall know I have the hardest fighting of my life before me with Sir John Baldwin as mine adversary; but I shall know, too, that it will be honest fighting."

"And I, your Highness, shall know I have to deal with the gallantest and most chivalrous prince of Europe."

Giving me one more grip of his hand he shook his rein and with a most courteous salute cantered off; while I turned back to retake my way homeward and to resume my thoughts of Nell.

As I rode slowly back, chewing sweet and bitter thoughts and having no nourishment from them, something glittering in the dust of the road caught my eye. It was at a point where a half hour before the Prince and I had checked our steeds, while he, drawing forth his tablets, made an entry of something I had told him. Just where his horse stood shone this glittering thing, which when I came nearer I found was a ring, and one too that I had given Nell on my return from London more than two years ago.

It was a boy's gift to a girl and a simple thing, of no great value in itself; a twisted serpent with small and sparkling eyes. Dismounting I picked it up. There could



be no doubt it was the very ring, and at sight of it my heart leaped within me; and I felt a great longing to clasp and hold and kiss the hand upon which I had so often seen it.

But how came it there? Nell could not have been there so early that morning; and I knew she had not left the Hall the day before, being engaged in the preparations to receive the Prince. It could not have been there any great time, for the highway was well traveled, and it would not have escaped all eyes. As I puzzled I put it to my lips and kissed it; and as I did so I remembered, all on a sudden, that it was here the Prince's horse stood when he took out his tablets, bringing with them a handful of trinkets, such as every young gentleman doth ever carry about him. Could he have had it, and could he have dropped it there?

I led Roger to the shade of a tree and sat down on the roots; for I felt that I would like to think the matter out. The more I thought the more convinced I became that the Prince had lost the ring there. What then? How came the ring in his possession? Did Nell give it him? It might be, in an innocent exchange of tokens—it was a poor, little trinket, of no great worth like a dozen others that she had. And yet I did not relish the thought, for I had given her the ring; not attaching aught of significance to the giving, it is true; it might as well have been a piece of ribbon, or any other trifle; and yet, somehow, the fear that she might have thought so little of the bauble I had given as to exchange it with the Prince for something she might prize more highly, filled me with a pain against which I felt that I must struggle as an unmanly thing to yield to.

Roger grew impatient finally, for the flies were bad in the hot May morning and his restlessness aroused me from the revery into which I had fallen. It was of no use to sit there mooning over the problem; for I should never, in that way, find its solution. Besides I had other things to think of than such unimportant matters as the why and



wherefore of the finding of a child's cheap trinket, on the King's highway. And so I got me home; where I said nothing to my mother concerning the matter, nor to my sister Betty, neither; although it is to the one or the other if not to both, that I go whenever I am puzzled and want the help of finer brains than mine own. But I hung the ring about my neck on a gold chain my mother gave me when I was a boy; and often felt it nestling over my heart.

For three months I made frequent occasion to visit the Hall, but never saw Nell alone, till yesterday (for, as usual, in the case of this, my journal, my promise is ever greater than my performance, and this entry, which was begun yesterday the 27th is being concluded—I hope—to-day, which is the 28th) and verily I am persuaded I lost a stone in weight because I could not compass the object of my hopes which was to have it out with her.

I know not what perverse fate was meddling with my affairs and putting them all awry. Never before in my life had I any difficulty in meeting Nell and talking freely to her. Indeed the Hall hath always been a second home to me; and when a boy, hungry and tired, I made as free to walk into the Hall kitchen and demand what I would as I did at the Mere; aye, and I always got it, too. And so it was with the whole house and place. No one ever thought it strange to find me there without warning, announcement, nor invitation neither—it had always been understood that I should come and go at will. And of course this often threw me with Nell.

But of late it hath been different. Sometimes I wondered if she could have had any part in so managing that either the Lady Priscilla, or Sir Charles, or Charley, or somebody or other, must ever be with her when I bore down upon the place with full intent to see her and have the thing over once for all. But then I thought that could not be, for two unanswerable reasons, videlicet: (a) She could not know or imagine what I had upon my mind; she could have no suspicion of it, for I am not the kind



to wear my heart upon my sleeve; and (b) She would not care, if she did know, to keep the matter from coming to the issue, for the reason that if she loved me she would be glad to know that I loved her, and if she loved me not she would not think the matter of my declaration a thing to run away from; the rather would it be like unto a dose of medicine, which, if to be taken, why the sooner the better and so have done with it.

And so I reasoned it out and learned little; but there came a time when I thought of my father's saying that women are queer creatures and very hard to understand. In truth they seem to have no sense of logic or the true proportion and relative importance of things. And yet without them I would not care to live in this world, I think.

It so fell out yesterday that, sending about my summonses for recruits for Mr. Cromwell's Troop, I had to borrow Dickon from the Hall; which I managed by sending Charley a note apprising him of what was toward, and asking the loan of the man. And so, when I got to the Hall, feeling like a man who would rather rejoice to know his errand was to the mouth of his grave, I found the news well known at least to some; and the Lady Priscilla met me with a tearful embrace that I was probably so soon to go off to the wars, and O! I must be careful of myself, and what would everybody do if aught should happen to me; and how was my mother, the dear Lady Nancy, bearing up under it? And when I told her that my mother knew nothing of it, nor no one else neither at the Mere, save my brother Will, who is to go in the Earl of Bedford's troop, she reproached me most bitterly for having kept it such a secret; whereupon I told her that I felt it not only a duty, but a pleasure as well, to deny my mother the luxury of grief on my account, whenever I could; and that she would know it all, soon enough, and that when it could no longer be kept from her would be the best time to tell her; at which the Lady Priscilla kissed me, and said I was a heartless, unfeeling wretch, and an



ingrate; the which may all be true, but how she proves it by these present facts I cannot conceive. But women are queer, as see above quotation from my father.

However I made bold to ask for Nell (though I felt more squeamish than, so far as my memory serves me, ever I did in all my life, and was angry with myself that it was so) saying that I had something to communicate to her which she would be most concerned to hear; and inwardly prayed God to forgive my deceitful stratagem.

“Is the new pup in trouble, the one your father should have sent to her this morning? Is it of the new breed of Scotch collies? For she is most anxious to see him, never having seen one of that kind of dogs.”

“No, my dear Lady Priscilla; it is not a *new* pup that is in trouble; nor hath my father sent him. It is by no means so grave a matter as that; so let your mind be at rest. The case is of an old and very useless one; of whom no one, I am persuaded, can make anything, save Nell only.”

“Indeed she hath a marvelous skill with pups, John, and is ever interested in them. And it seems to me the more worthless they are the more deeply she is concerned for them.”

“Pray God, she hath not lost her interest in them then, for this one is in as bad a way as ever I saw a pup; and he is about as worthless as they make them.”

“Well, if Nell can not help him I do not know who can.”

“Nor I neither, Lady Priscilla,” and some day I shall know whether or not the Lady Priscilla did really smile as I thought she did, when she left the room, and whether she did really read my errand in my face. But there, how could she? No. It is impossible; what should a woman know of what a man is hiding from her, when he puts his mind to it?

When Nell came in she looked really ill, but I feared to say so to her.

“It is a fine day, Nell.”



"Really, John, you are too good. Nobody else in the world would have come all the way from the Mere to tell me so. And, now you speak of it, I perceive that it is a monstrous fine day John; even if it is raining cats and dogs."

And so it was! And I was soaked, and all my fine attire draggled and dripping. I had ridden over in a heavy storm, and had not known there was one.

"I'm a fool, Nell. It is raining."

"You are, John; and it is."

Then I sat and looked it for a moment.

"Speaking of fools, Nell, have you had news of Lord Lovering lately? He is still in London I'm told."

"Do you know, John, that God hath wonderfully blessed us who live here in the Fens? We have everything here of the most superlative quality. It is not so with many parts of England, where the home production is so inadequate they have to send abroad to supply the deficiency; but here in the Fens we have no need to import *anything* from London."

"It may not be so when the war comes, Nell"—and I could have bitten my tongue out for having said it; for poor Nell went pale, and, twisting her fingers, cried—

"O, surely, John, there will be no war. God will not permit it! Do you think there will be?"

"Prince Rupert reminded me of it the other day. You know he hath fought gallantly abroad and you know I rode with him the day he left here—and, naturally, talking with a soldier makes one think of war."

"But is there news"—

I was growing desperate, and beginning to lie with a prospect of being called upon to do more of it. In my desperation I sought any refuge—

"You know you sent me after him, Nell. And you would not throw me a kiss to show that he had not ridden away with your heart, but told me to go after it, and Nell, Nell, I pray God I brought it back with me; for if I did not I am of all men the most unhappy and wretched; for O



Nell, my little playmate, I love you! I love you! God forgive me, but I feel as if I love you more than my own soul! Nay, do not speak! Wait! See! You said to bring back anything else of yours he had! And see, see!" and I tore the chain out of my breast with the little ring hanging to it. Nell sat like a stone image, pale, as if striving against herself.

"Do not tell me that you do not love me, Nell! You shall not! You must! You do! See, I gave thee this, loving thee at the time but was so great a fool I knew it not"——

She gave a little cry, reaching forward to grasp the ring. I caught her in my arms. She bent her face. Presently (for she moved not and I was making bold with a great boldness) I put my hands under her chin and raised her head, and it fell back on my shoulder with her mouth within an inch of mine. Her eyes were full of tears, but she closed them and looked not unhappy. . . .

It may be the Lady Dysert knoweth how to kiss; but if she doth she never kissed me. . . .

"When did you first begin to love me, Nell?" I asked, as she sat, quiet and with great content, upon my knee.\*

"It was some time after you had cut your first tooth, John, dear."

"So long ago as that?"

\*If I was sitting upon his knee it was because he had sprawled his great, huge self all over the little ante-room where we were; there was nowhere else to sit, and I must sit somewhere! Sir John seemed never to bethink him of the vast space he always took up.

The Prince Rupert had stolen my ring that night, while we were seated in the alcove, desperately flirting—on my part because I was angry with Sir John that he would not come to my relief; for I had grown prodigious weary of the Prince, who is no more to be compared to Sir John than is a tallow-dip to the sun. But Sir John never asked a word about the ring!

I find this blank space and make this note, knowing he will never see it; for while he writes here he never reads what is written.

ELEANOR BALDWIN.

THE MANOR, VIRGINIA, 24th Dec., 1663.



“Yea, verily, my Lord Methusaleh. At least so it seemeth to me.”

“And I not to know it, all this time.”

“What didst thou ever know about anything save horses and dogs, and hawking and hunting, and swimming, and rowing, and running races, and fighting, and—rescuing men from highwaymen at the risk of thy own life, and nursing the dying from small-pox when every one else fled like cowards, and saving little children from drowning and whipping great brutal bullies, and”—her eyes were shining brighter and brighter, and the clasp of her arm about my neck was growing tighter and tighter, till I verily believe my eyes were popping out of my head and I kissed her again to stop her nonsense.

“And,” she gurgled and gasped, “being ever patient and gentle with a rude hoyden of a maid, who, when she treated thee most unkindly loved thee most, for that she knew thou wast the dearest, bravest, truest, greatest, most unselfish, wrong-headed, obstinate conceited and transparently honest and sincere old stupid of a Jack-the-Giant-Killer that ever was!”

There my dears; that is what your grandmother said of your grandsire; and now it is written once for all and an end to it. It only shows to what extravagant folly the best and wisest are irrevocably betrayed by the rogue Cupid, for I am persuaded by her sweetly peculiar manner at the moment, that your grandmother really believed that she thought all of that. I pray God He shall vouchsafe me grace ever to maintain the delusion into which she hath been delivered.

Shall I then profit by this deceit which hath taken her? Yea, verily, shall I, if my poor wits may keep her so. And to that end shall I ever strive—and pray.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### HE FIGHTETH UNDER CROMWELL

THE MERE, 15th November, 1646.

IT hath been a long time since I writ the last entry in this, my journal. By turning back its leaves I might find the exact date, but that will involve the labor of reading some of it, the which will I not do; to write is bad enough, to read is worse. Mayhap those grandchildren of mine will be of a more scholarly turn and so enjoy that which is to me a penance—if I may use a word that hath a Romish taint. If they shall not be scholars and so shall not read they shall gain time for useful employ, and no harm shall come to them; for their loss will not be great. If they do read, 'twill be no great matter, and, again, no harm done, by God's blessing.

But if my last entry was of my wooing of the Mistress Eleanor Hedges (and now I do bethink me it must have been, for that happened just before I joined the Parliament's army to engage in a sterner conflict, albeit I feared it not nearly so much), it was just a little more than four years ago that 'twas made.

During those years I have been too busy to push a screeching quill over good blue paper. I have had other fish to fry. And praise the Lord for His mercies, I have fried many of them, or assisted at the frying, to the glory of His Great Name.

They have been four years that shall stand with splendor in the history of His wars!

For He hath been with us, and under His guidance and leadership have we come off more than conquerors. There hath been hard fighting and a plenty of it; and good English blood hath been shed with unsparing lavishness. But



not a drop of it shall be lost! It shall go to the fertilizing of the ready soil in the hearts and consciences of the English people to the bringing forth of rich fruits for those now living, and who shall follow.

The King, I hope, will now listen to reason. He hath fought long and well; but he must now see that the hand of God is with the people and against him. I have such love for him personally that it is my prayer to God that he may now accept the rule of Him Who is the King of Kings, and Whose will, as embodied forth in the success of those things for which the English people have been striving, is plainly set out, and shall be done here on earth as it is in Heaven.

Charles Stuart is not at heart a bad man; he meaneth well to all men. But he must yield assent to the establishment of those safeguards to the liberties of this people to which, under God, they have by sternest arbitrament of arms gained the right, and the recognition of the right, to have; and he must forever cease to coquette with Rome. But while I hope that he will yield to this and so come back to the throne, the loved and worthy sovereign of this land, yet do I fear that there is and hath been from his birth (so that it hath become ingrained in his nature) that conception of his God-given right to rule and to rule subject to no questioning or interference from the people, carrying out his own wishes without consultation with them, or indeed without regard to what they may conceive to be right, just, and expedient, that he will remain unchanged and still struggle to come back to his place free from those obligations which the people know they must impose upon him and every King.

If he doth so remain obstinate and stiff-necked it is hard to see what may happen; save this: that he may never again occupy England's throne on the old terms. And it is so fearsome a thing to think of, what may come to pass in such circumstances, that the heart of the stoutest might well tremble, were it not for the assurance that the righteous ever have, that God will have all things to work



together for good to those who are of the Elect, as are these English people.

There is that in the sorry plight of the poor King that doth awaken in every generous heart feelings of deep sympathy, and inspire the wish even in the breasts of those who have fought most manfully against him, that he may come to no further harm nor humiliation. He is (or was at my latest advices) the prisoner of the Scottish army and it can be but a short time before he shall become the prisoner of his own people. Flying from them he went (with what vain hope who may say?) to those who should be no readier to embrace his cause than are we who have borne the heat and the burden of the fight against it. To them he is a fallen monarch, whom (even if they try, as it is by some suspected they will) they can never place back upon the throne against the will of the English people.

It is a hard thing to believe that those (the Scotch Army) who have wrought so valiantly side by side with us in the great cause shall now suffer themselves to be deluded into giving the King aid in his efforts to re-establish himself, in the hope that with him they may become the dominant power in this realm. And yet there is that fear of Presbyterianism among those who attend most closely to the signs of the times and search most deeply into the hearts and probe most zealously into the motives of men, that works great and grave anxiety. The Parliament, which hath a majority of Presbyterian members, doth hold itself in such wise that this uneasiness is but increased. Day by day and month by month it hath been withdrawing from its army that trust and confidence, that sympathy and support, which that army hath so faithfully won and doth so truly deserve. And it needs not that a prophet should come to tell what shall be the result if this attitude shall be maintained.

Men who do not see, after the bitter and trying experiences through which this Nation hath just passed, that the saving salt of every great work that hath been, aye, or shall be, performed, hath been and is in that army, are



short-sighted and purblind indeed. God grant that it may not be called upon to make an adjustment of the unsettled and menacing conditions left by the war; for I do incline to the belief that a government of armed men for a people like ours is much to be feared, and but little better if any, than that of a kingly despot. But—an if the intrigues of Charles shall so affect the Parliament and the Presbyterians that they shall essay an adjustment which shall fritter away the proper fruits of the victories our soldiers have so hardly achieved, or if they shall attempt with the power which the army hath preserved in them and their hands to do aught contrary to the purpose for which it fought and suffered, then may God in His infinite love for His people grant to that army wisdom in statecraft in equal measure to the valor with which He hath so abundantly endowed it. For so sure as this emergency shall appear to be upon us just so certainly will the army essay the task of securing to the people of England that which they have so far gained for them, and which must not be suffered to be lost.

With what wonderful grace and valor and wisdom hath God been pleased to endow our quondam neighbor (for he hath now taken his household to London) Oliver Cromwell! And how much it ought to teach to the world that the true way to rise and shine is to serve God truly and faithfully; and wait upon Him, and seek to know only His purposes; and then to strive for their fulfillment.

For to all who know him well, and as he is, this hath been at all times that which most possessed Mr. Cromwell's heart, and the main-spring and governing motive of his life. And see what God hath wrought with him. Chiefest and most skilful and valiant among all the great and gallant leaders of the Parliament's army his arm hath even been the most potent, his valor the most perfect and irresistible, and his wisdom the most profound and approved. Step by step hath he risen, till from the Captain of a Troop he hath become Lieutenant General; and though second in command of the forces, hath actually been



leader, inspirer and dictator. He is covered with glory as with a garment because of his successes. His honor and praise are in the mouths of all men, and his deservings are even greater than he hath received. How can God more clearly designate one whom He hath sealed to His purposes and chosen for His greatest work?

A plain country gentleman, having reached the years of maturity, aye of more than middle life, in following those tranquil pursuits which seem furthest removed from war, its art and practice, he entered the army by the side of many who had served long and well, and with distinguished credit, elsewhere, and who were deemed, and who in fact actually were, accomplished soldiers. One would have thought that Mr. Cromwell, whatever his zeal or valor or patience, would be always a follower of those who were trained soldiers. And yet it was he who made our army what it was and is. With the instinct of a born soldier, from the first he enforced, beginning with our own home troop, such regulations as to drill and discipline and soldierly conduct in all respects, as soon made of us (raw, green, country lads and gentlemen as we were) a most wonderfully effective band; coming to the charge of a regiment he there employed the same methods and accomplished the same results. And so he went on, with each enlargement of his command widening his usefulness, till at last the entire army came under his influence. And such an army as he hath made it the world hath probably never before seen.

In battle he was the incarnation of valor and generalship. He never made a mistake in his manoeuvring, nor in the disposition of his forces, nor in his choice of time and place to strike his blow. To his soldiers he was as an invincible divinity who could not err, and wherever he was seen, whenever his voice was heard, there and then they pressed forward fearless of aught they might encounter, certain that to be with him was to be victorious. And so were they ever conquerors.

And all this under God! For, as he, Cromwell himself



doth often confess (nay, it is his boast!) there is no glory in all that hath been done that belongeth to man. None that was not of the will and inspiration of the Most High God, Who set His own occasions, chose His instruments, and sent them forth filled with His Holy Spirit to do His work.

And it was in this spirit that Oliver Cromwell would have his men to fight and in no other would he have them. Whether he was the Captain of a Troop or the Colonel of a Regiment or a General Commanding the Horse or, as Lieutenant General, set over many men and in charge of wide operations, he ever taught and enjoined, nay enforced, that spiritual discipline which made his soldiers mighty men of valor, because they went forth to battle clad in the whole armor of God. Every tent hath been a temple consecrated to the worship of God; and every soldier hath been taught that to pray, and to pray unceasingly, was no less an instant, a daily and an hourly duty, than to practice in military exercises and to keep his arms constantly in readiness for prompt use. The prayer-meeting, when men prayed in groups, by Troops, and by Regiments, hath ever been as much a part of the regular routine of the soldiers under General Cromwell as any other part of their military duty; while to pray in secret for His guidance, blessing and strength, was to each as imperative as to keep his outward person cleansed and free from disease and in such training as to fit him for any physical performance. The preaching services, to nourish and quicken men's hearts, were held no less important than the feeding by which was recruited and sustained their bodily strength. They chanted the Psalms of David as they rode in serried ranks of invincible courage into battle, and when they charged the slogan was ever an inspiration from God's Holy Word.

Then why should they not be conquerors and more than conquerors? Who should stand against them? For it was not an army of mere men led by a mere man, that followed Oliver Cromwell to wondrous achievement; but an army of chosen instruments, led, inspired, sustained,



guided and directed by the Lord God Jehovah. And to His name be all the glory!

There have been changes here, too, in these great and awful days, but not all of much importance. The Mere is still the dear old home, the spot of earth which hath never, to my eyes, been excelled for all true loveliness and the charm that makes a joy of living. And when I came hither a few days ago to spend a brief time in rest and repose, the emotions with which each well remembered spot and feature of the landscape rejoiced, as it did seem, to fill my heart, may not easily be described; and truly they are not like unto any other ever felt by me. By the time I reached the door I was, as it were, so soaked through with dear and fond recollections, that my eyes were fain to fill with happy tears; and I thought I had no more room for feeling. But when my noble sire grasped my hand and praised God that he had lived to see me once more; and my sainted mother had folded me in a mother's velvet arms; and my sister Betty had melted into sweetest joy upon my neck; I knew then that a gracious God had made man's capacity all unlimited to feel and assimilate that love, which, to me, is the chiefest of the blessings He hath sent to His earthly children.

My father groweth old and is, I fear, not long for this world. But he is erect and proud as the storm-tried old oak, which, racked and wrenched though its shaken fibers may be, yet doth not lose the iron hardness of its greener day. His eye still flashes, and his voice still rings as of yore—but not always. His step hath its old-time firmness—but only at times. His heart remains as stout, and to me 'tis sweeter; for with your true man time brings to the heart only a wiser, nobler charity; and as it ripens to its eternal stilling it grows ever better, more tender, more kind and more compelling in the power of its purified and chastened affection.

The gray hairs gleam more frostily on my mother's dear head; and the anxiety of four years of dreadful war, with two loved sons ever in its greatest dangers, have carven



new lines in her sweet face and deepened the softness of the crystal pure soul that beams from her gentle loving eyes. Yet doth she not show such signs of breaking as doth my father.

Betty is more the woman and less the girl than four years ago. She hath a form like a Juno, statuesque in repose and splendid in action. She hath relieved our mother of the greater part of the cares of the house, and that, and the impress of the thoughts which the war hath brought to her even here in this quiet, tranquil spot, have moulded her face to a firmer grace of shape. Where shall a husband worthy of her be found? I have never yet seen such a man.

My brother Will is still with the army where he hath hewn his way, with that steady will and undaunted courage that was ever his distinguishing trait, to the front. He got his Colonelcy in '43; mine waited till a year ago; but I got my Captaincy at Edgehill, where, in the affair with the King's red guards I had the good fortune to take with my own hand, the King's standard. (Charles saw and recognized me, for I got near to his person; and when I seized the standard he, in the way that was like him always, first shook his sword fiercely at me, then smilingly saluted, as if to congratulate me.) There hath never been a danger so great that my brother Will hath not been ready to face it; not with noisy defiance, as I fear me, is too often the way of his big brother, but with a nice calmness in which there is nothing to show aught of excitement save a glitter in his eye. And while ready, always, to meet the most threatening of dangers and prompt to thrust himself and his men into the hottest places, he hath the slowest gait to leave them of any man in the army. Surely it is an honor to be known as his brother, of the which I am more proud than I can say. My only complaint hath been that we have not often been allowed to fight near to each other; he is usually put in the one wing and I in another; and of this I once spoke to our leader.

"Nay," said General Cromwell, "'twould be unjust to



others to put you two Fens tigers together; let other families have some opportunity—there are other parts of England than the Fens Country, and other good blood besides that of the Baldwins. Be content and not greedy, thou great Son of Anak.”

My poor bitch Rosalind is dead, and Betty has her buried in a sunny spot west of the orchard, where I visited her grave and grieved that she was gone—for she was a good dog. Roger’s bones lie bleaching on Marston Moor. He was a horse of righteous conversation, and, fearing naught, of a godly intrepidity. There decay also the bones of Tom Templeton’s Prince David, for there Tom lost his horse and won his Captaincy. On that field fell, in the King’s ranks, Sir Roger Birney. On learning of his death I forgave him the wrong he once did me (by trapping me into the fight with Bully Ben), as it was my Christian duty to do; and tried to feel thankful that I had never met him after that night. Sir Richard Hatton leadeth a Troop in the Parliament’s army, and him do I love; for he was not to blame in the Bully Ben affair, and hath approved himself a good soldier, albeit with painful struggles to keep his piety up to high-water mark. Squire Walsingham hath become a constant frequenter of taprooms and is going to his death by the way of the Valley of Strong Drink. ’Tis a pity, too; for he was a jolly companion, and as master of ceremonies at a cock-fight the best I ever knew.

Dorothy Taber, my little Dorothy, whom I have loved since she was born, hath grown the sweetest, modestest and most winsome little maiden in all the country-side, with shy brown eyes, and a smile as pure as the light from a star. She is now twelve years old, and at first I was hurt that she seemed to take me strangely; but that soon passed, and she became once more my little mistress, only less imperious and requiring than before.

(Note:—To see to Dorothy’s marriage, when the time comes, that she shall make no mistake, but wed one worthy of her. Maidens are not to be trusted in such



matters, for the best of them have foolish fancies which are soon caught, and too often by ne'er-do-weels. Indeed there is no better rule than that a maiden should implicitly rely upon the judgment of her father, or other person qualified; and marry no one without his consent. As Ned, her father, now a Sergeant in our home Troop, and a fine soldier, is lacking in that perspicacity which one having in hand a matter of such grave moment should show, I shall make it my personal concern. Even in the most imperious days of her babyhood Dorothy was ever a sweet and obedient child to me, and, of course, will never be other.)

Sir Geoffrey Templeton is the stoutest old Parliament man that ever mourned that gout and age will not let him take the field; while the Lady Helen is equally devoted to the Great Cause, and delighted that Sir Geoffrey is laid by the heels and cannot leave her. They are both of great (almost sinful, and yet not a whit too much) pride, in their son, Tom, who will yet win the measure of renown his father gained years ago in the Low Countries wars.

And Charley Hedges hath high and well-earned rank on the staff of the Lord General. . . .

At last must I come to it! I have babbled and maundered of I know not what in these scribblings, with some foolish, half-formed and wholly crazy notion that I might avoid the matter that doth fill all my thoughts waking, and color my dreams sleeping. For Nell is not here! Only twice in the four years, when I paid my two flying visits home between campaigns, have I seen her; and then but briefly and most unsatisfactorily.

To be plain and blunt with you, my dear grand-children, the bald and ugly fact is that if your great-grandfather, Sir Charles Hedges, hath his way, and he is now greatly set upon it, thou wilt have no grand-mother; a state of things against Nature and which, in my contemplation, hath nothing to commend it and certainly not to you. But if Sir Charles shall succeed in his purpose to prevent our marriage it shall be after he hath demonstrated himself



a more resolute and enduring man than Big John Baldwin; for his determination against the match, be it firm as adamant, shall be weak as water to meet the force of my fixed purpose to the contrary.

We had deemed it wise to say nothing, at first, of our love for each other, and concealed it from all (albeit I have often thought that the Lady Priscilla had a shrewd suspicion as to the quarter whence the wind set); until I came home late in October '43, soon after the affair near Winceby, where I got the sword cut which hath parted my hair over my right temple. I had but two days to stay for I was needed in Lincolnshire. This was my second visit, the last one prior to this present one on which I am now here.

Word had reached me months before, through Mr. Cromwell, that Sir Charles had been behaving in a manner not consistent with one who was professedly loyal to the Cause; and I was set to investigate the matter. The business was little to my liking, but a soldier may not pick and choose the thing he will or will not do. I set discreet men upon the enquiry, relying chiefly upon Ned Taber to whom I gave a furlough to visit his family, here at the Mere. The upshot of it all was more than I wished to know.

It was, indeed, not found that Sir Charles had gone over to the King, at least openly; but it was found that he was in correspondence with Prince Rupert, and that the Prince was shrewdly using Sir Charles's wild and foolish hope that he would wed Nell to obtain information with which the doting old Knight had been indiscreetly entrusted. I saw to it that no further harm came to him for this than that his lines of communication with Rupert should be closed. And it was not long after this that I visited the Mere, and was almost as speedily at Hedge Hall, to see my Nell. Of her I never had a fear—I knew nothing would ever shake her loyalty to me.

We were allowed but a very brief greeting, by no means such as would fill the longing of a sweetheart back from



the wars, when Sir Charles sent me word that he desired my presence at once in his private closet.

"What means this, Nell?" I asked.

"I think I know, John; but 'tis better you shall learn it from my father, so that, as a skilful soldier, having personal knowledge of the ground, you may plan your battle, if one must be fought, with due regard thereto. But know one thing, John, that whatever my father may say, there never hath been nor shall there be but one man in all the world who shall ever wear the name of husband to Nell Hedges. God send your interview with my father may be of a termination which shall please you; for then I know it shall please me. But whatever it may be, and however it may conclude, remember what I have said; and that though thou art at the world's end I shall come to thee when thou dost call me, no matter what time or events may intervene. Now kiss me John, and go, and may God go with thee!"

Now all this was mightily discomposing to me, and of prodigious comfort, too. I scarce expected, up to this time, that Sir Charles's insane hope would lead him to a stout resistance to our marriage, when he saw that Nell truly loved me; but her words showed me that the old Knight had been at work with earnest purpose upon her; and that he had not shaken her, was a joyful thing to be assured of from her sweet lips, though I had never feared it. And so I went to his closet.

It hath been my experience that it is an advantage to give the enemy no time once the lines have been set over against each other. The better way is to leap on him without any ceremony. So that, albeit it went mightily against the grain to hold as my enemy the father of her whom I loved better than my life, and especially when that father happened to be Sir Charles Hedges, a gallant knight of approved qualities and blameless life, who, moreover, had always been kind and indulgent to me, I determined to charge his line before he had even time to bid his trumpeter sound the onset.



"Sir Charles," I cried, with no delay for other greeting, "I come to ask the hand of your daughter Eleanor, in marriage. I love her and, praise God, she doth love me too; and so there can be no obstacle to our wish."

Sir Charles is an old soldier and used to war's alarms, and my assault, while I am persuaded it was not looked for, still did not serve to disorder him. He smiled grimly.

"You have learned your business well, Sir John, and I have little doubt deserve your fame as a brave and skilful soldier. Your stratagem is one which hath been approved for many years in the art of war. But it shall not serve thee this time. It hath failed of its effect, as it ever will with a soldier of experience, for such a man is never off his guard in time of danger and in the presence of the enemy."

"The enemy, Sir Charles? Am I thy enemy?"

"In that thou art here to take away my daughter, why yes, man! To be brief and make the battle a short if sharp and decisive one, I reply that you shall not marry my daughter; and to treat you as an old friend, a lad whom I have ever loved and wished well to, I advise that you abandon all thought of such a happening; for it may never be!"

Here was his horse upon me in most gallant and resolute fashion. It stirred my blood to hear the clash of sword and feel the heavy on-rush of his battalions.

"And why, sir?"

"She is for your betters, sir."

"Why, then, I am about it may be, to learn something, Sir Charles. May I ask who is he who is entitled to hold himself superior to John Baldwin?"

"Do you mean to say that you know of none?"

"I have not traveled far nor wide, Sir Charles; but so far as my journeys have taken me, I have not met him. If there is a man on earth who is more than my peer, in any of those things which go to the constituting of a gentleman, I do most heartily desire that I may meet him."

"Thou art a foolish boy!"



“Nay, but name the man, Sir Charles.”

I knew the old knight would not dare to name the Prince Rupert, for he had no ground for the hope that was in him, but only the foolish thing itself.

“Softly! Softly, my dear lad! Thou hast thy good parts, but thou hast embarked on a foolish journey in this that thou shalt never come to the haven where thou wouldst be. Take the advice of an old and a true friend and abandon this project, for thou shalt never marry Eleanor Hedges.”

“Why look you, Sir Charles, I have every respect and veneration for thee and thy house and thy name and thy just deserts. But I were false to myself, false to thee and above all false to the sweetest, dearest maid that God ever sent to earth, did I not tell thee, in all respectful meaning, that I love Eleanor Hedges and she doth love me, and that neither thy opposition, strive as thou may'st, nor aught else under Heaven, nor nothing that may exist, save only God's will, shall prevent our marriage. I trust most sincerely, Sir Charles, that I have made my meaning and my purpose clear to thee?”

“Thou shalt never marry her! Though ye both go upon thy bended knees, my consent shall never be given!”

“It were a sad thing to think upon a marriage with thy dear daughter without thy consent; but an thou wilt have it so, I'll e'en contemplate the prospect. For marry we will, with or without thy blessing—though we would greatly desire it.”

“You forget, sir, that I am her father——”

“Nay, I have just been talking of it.”

“I am her father, and say thou shalt never marry her!”

“That, then, is thy last answer?”

“Aye, my last! I will not permit it!”

“Why, then, I may e'en as well give my last answer, also. And here it is. Know thou, Sir Charles, that though thou art her father and forbid me to wed her; though thou wert ten thousand times her father; though thou wert ten thousand times ten thousand fathers, and had all



the other fathers on earth to back thee up (and I speak with all due moderation, civility and respect), yet will I marry Eleanor Hedges.—not all the world shall prevent me.”

“Leave the house, sir,” he thundered, purple with rage. “Leave the house; thou art a blustering braggart, unworthy of the father who bred thee.”

“Sir Charles—I—thou——” and then I cooled, thinking of Nell, and bowed and turned my back on him, “thou art her father.” And out I went.



## CHAPTER XXV

### HE HATH A LETTER FROM NELL

18th November.

I HAVE rid over all the country-side to find much to joy me in the bringing back of fond recollections of the golden days which lie behind me. But I shall never go near Hedge Hall again when Nell is absent therefrom. There is too much in what the sight of it recalls, too much to sadden and depress a man who must keep his wits about him. I have but just come from there. The windows are closed and dark and it looks like the corpse that once was the home of a loved soul.

It was not at the casement window at which she made her farewell courtesy to the Prince Rupert, strangely enough, that I longest gazed; but at that upper one, whereat she once did twist her pretty face into such uncouth, gargoyle aspects as made me laugh and yet grieve at what I then deemed a sinful lightness, the day I came back from putting the Rev. Mr. Balsley on his road from the Mere. Poor Nell! Little did I dream then how much I loved her. 'Tis passing strange that I have been such a fool so long a time. And never even suspected it. I doubt, though, it is a way all fools may have.

It was while I lay at York in July, '44, recovering from a hurt received at Marston Moor (but Roger, poor fellow, fared the worse; for that which hurt me little, killed him), that I made out, in a letter from my mother that Sir Charles upon hearing of the upshot of that great battle had taken his family with him to France; saying he would remain abroad till peace should come again since he was too old and broken to do a man's part and could not endure to see, day by day, what a man might do if he were but in his proper vigor.



It was not easy to get all this out of my dear mother's letter, which was so frenzied in its thankfulness to God that He had spared my life that she could not wait to conclude a sentence of home news but must break out in the very middle of it, to praise God that the cannon ball which tore out poor old Roger's heart had done no more than break a bone for me. Indeed it is like the mothers God doth give to all alike, deserving and undeserving, that they must ever be thinking most of their children.

I was soon well of my hurt and in a matter of three months was able to stay on my horse at our second affair at Newbury, though I limped lamely when a-foot. But the limp passed with time and now I am better than ever; measuring six feet and a fraction over six inches and riding at a little more than sixteen stone. I shall be content if the Lord shall now stay His bounty in the matter of my height and weight and vouchsafe no more to the increasing of my width; there are others who need of these whatever may remain in His infinite resources more than do I; and yet can I out-run, out-wrestle and out-leap any man in the army whom I have so far tried conclusions with (and there be many who seem to take a curious pleasure in seeing a big man handle himself as every man should); my swordmanship is, I think, better than ever. But there be drawbacks; the beds of England have usually, I am persuaded, been measured to fit the more unfortunate to whom God hath not been pleased in His goodness to give much—because of their small deserts, mayhap—and it is not pleasant to sleep curled up like a serpent nor to wake to find a yard-long part of one's self thrust out from under the covers and exposed to the shrewd nipping of a winter's night. And, look you, a large body doth require ample sustenance and one doth not like to feel that in supplying only his most necessary wants he is breeding a famine in the camp.

Still it is as God wills as to my size; my part, as I conceive it, is to make good use of that wherewith He hath



endowed me, in that work unto which He hath called me; and that shall I do He being my helper.

It was a hard blow to me to read the news my mother sent; indeed the pain and bruise and ache of it seemed harder to endure than that which came with the breaking of my leg. Not that I doubted Nell. God bless the dear maid; wherever she is, whatever she may be at, however she may be placed, may His Holy angels form her escort and her body-guard, to keep her from all harm, to shield her from all danger (sin cannot touch her and she can take care of herself, as to that), and fill her heart especially and at all times with sweet thoughts of her big, buff-coated lover, who never forgets her for a moment whatever be his employ; whose pen in writing these lines ever moves through her pictured face smiling up at him from the virgin page; who in the heat of every battle in which he hath fought hath heard, as a melody sent from Heaven, the music of her voice sounding clear and pure above the roar of guns and the clash of arms and armor, and marveled that it should be with him in such a place, but thanked God with sincerest gratitude that it was so; who, when he prays to the God he serves, sees His face in the likeness of hers and reads the unimaginable love of the dear Christ in the vision of her gentle eyes; and knows that it is ordained of the Father and is no sin that he doth so in his heart body forth the Divinity.

I knew not to what part of France the mad Sir Charles had taken her (for he is mad); and know you now, my dear grand-children, that if any there be among you who is *non compos mentis*, or lame in heart, mind or wits, or froward, pig-headed and perverse, obstinate, head-strong opinionated or self-willed, or in any other way cantankerous, he takes it not from me nor from your grand-mother, Eleanor Hedges (for if it fall not to her fortune to be such then none will you ever have), but from Sir Charles, your great-grandfather; with whom I pray it may be given to me to deal, with godly chastening and love.

I could not leave my post to follow whither I knew not



and so was like a blind horse going wheresoever I was driven; and am yet. But there came to me, in June, '45, while we were at Guiesborough, just before Naseby, put into my hand I know not how, a letter from her of date a month earlier, plainly brought to England by private means and giving no hint as to where she was when it was writ save that she was in France. That was nearly a year and a half ago; and I read it daily and sometimes more than once daily, till it parted into fragments; and then, sending to London, I had a golden case made in the form of a locket in which to keep it; and it rests ever on my heart and there shall rest till the time when I am borne to my grave; and to that last resting place shall it fare with me.

Although 'tis undecipherable now as it rests in the locket it burns on my heart where I do read it every morning with my chapter in God's Word and where I do turn for comfort and refreshing many times as the day wears on. And while it shall also to my grave with me, it shall nevertheless live; aye, for the uplifting and just pride of her posterity, here shall I copy it in:—

“ To Sir John Baldwin, Colonel of Horse, with The Parliament's Army, in the Field: Wherever he may be: These:  
France, 3d May, 1645.

“ MY DEAREST,—Knowing that thy true heart yearns for tidings of me I embrace an opportunity serving presently to send you my most dutiful, faithful and (thou knowest) undying love. The days that have gone by since last we met have been days of trial sweetened ever by the knowledge that wherever thou art thy heart turns still and steadfastly to one who hath been thy leal sweetheart since she knows not when (for her love for thee doth seem to have had no beginning, as we both do well know it shall have no ending), and shall be so long as God, Himself, is Love.

“ Know then, my dear, that I am in good bodily health; the only weakness that possesseth me being the longing to be once more and thenceforth forever with thee; and



that weakness is my strength. Where we are I think it best I shall not advertise thee. Thy place and thy work and all that thou can'st perform, is where thou art; and in thy presence there and in what thou performest is the glory that doth glorify me, because it is the sacrifice of one who rejoices that she hath been found worthy to thus aid in the up-building of Christ's Kingdom on earth and the securing to the people of England those things which free-men hold as an inheritance from God and may not yield up under any manner of compulsion. Remain thou there, thou dearest of all the earth, till thy mission as Christ's warrior be fulfilled. Then, in God's good time and way, we shall be brought together. Never doubt that, as I never doubt it; and in the serene faith of it find balm and healing comfort and sustaining grace to bide His will.

"In the trust thou hast ever had in me, so rest; for it is of God and shall come to its reward in due season.

"I may not make this too bulky for it must not be seen by sharp eyes here ever on the watch. Fear not for me; for what lacks from those who are disposed to carelessness or wilful disobligingness (which indeed is but little), Mistress Eleanor Hedges doth possess herself of as is her right and her great, good pleasure; nor hath she yet found any who have long cared to question her assumption. Fear not for me.

"Know that I am ever with thee; as God is; and I say it reverently, and with thanks. I do not adjure thee to be patient, for I know the soul that is in thee, that strong soul which shall never faint.

"We hear, slowly and by piece-meal, of the doings of the Parliament's army; and my heart reads in every line the tale of the working out of God's purpose. That which thou doest shall live to bless mankind for all time and uplift it as nothing since Our Dear Lord's death upon the Cross hath blessed and uplifted. Be thankful with all humility that He hath chosen and consecrated thee for the work.

"I know by now thou hast risen in rank and so address



thee by the lowest title thou dost deserve, looking for others higher, as one doth look for the rising of the sun.

“Keep me ever in the most sacred, secret place of thy dear heart; as I do keep thee in mine and ever shall.

“We bide His time only, and that without fear or questioning. To His most tender love do I commit thee; and so rest  
 THY LOVING NELL.”

God forgive me if I have sinned in that this hath become to me a new testament sent by His loving hand.

When first I read it it seemed that with His own hand He had lifted me up and set me down in some vast place where all that veils man's sight and blinds his understanding was swept aside and I stood face to face with the chaste and perfect and solemn beauty of the chiefest, dearest crown of all that life which He hath wrought. And when I read it on the pages of my heart, whenever I con this message o'er again, I feel a reverence that hath awe mingled with gratitude, unspeakable; and I come forth, each time, a new man, born again.

Nor do I think it sin in me, if in the meetings, when godly but sometimes most blatant and tedious and wordy men do laboriously pound out God's purposes from His Word, I do bathe myself in the limpid loveliness of the letter He inspired and Nell writ.



## CHAPTER XXVI

HE WILL NOT HELP TO KILL THE KING; AND GREAT  
WAVES GO OVER HIM

BALDWINSHERE, 10th February, 1649.

HOME, as one goeth from the mouth of the grave to rest in darkened chambers and feed on memories, and pray and wait till his strength do return; until in that mysterious way which no man may describe nor analyze God doth set him once more upon his feet and fill him again with interest in the things which but yesterday were dead and dust to him.

By two graves have I stood, feeling more call upon me for the strength to endure which only He that smiteth can give than ever I felt before. Indeed there was a time and it lasted for many hours and even days when I feared that all in which I had hitherto trusted, aye, even God Himself, was a delusion and I was but as a leaf driven by the idle winds here and there the sport of mere chance and a fool to think that I saw God's hand in any thing that happened to me. When I questioned the deep mouth of the swallowing grave it gave me back no reply; when I lifted my eyes to the blue Heavens the joyous brilliancy of the noonday sun smote upon me as a cruel mockery of my woe, the heartless laugh of an unfeeling Power that played with me.

The black waters came up and surged over me and blotted out all that had held me courageous and manly and godly in my faith and hope; and all was blackness and if not despair at least an indifference that seemed a greater hurt.

And from a third grave I fled; and flying from it came upon the other two; wherein my manhood plunged and



lay a wrecked and useless thing till God's grace wrought my deliverance.

On the evening before the day of the King's beheading General Cromwell sent for me in haste; repairing to his place he told me that reposing special trust and confidence in me he had chosen me as one of three Colonels who should, with Generals Ireton, Harrison and Axtell have charge of the execution. He was solemn and majestic while he spoke; his eyes glowing with a mystic fire that gave them a strange hold upon me. But I had no doubt as to what I should do and needed not to hesitate to seek what I should reply.

"My Lord General," I said, "for the trust and confidence thou hast in me I am greatly beholden and most appreciative. Thou hast ever been kind to me since the days of my boyhood."

"Thou hast ever deserved all the kindness I may have shown thee, Sir John, and more. And that which I do now, if it be the crowning testimony of my confidence in thee as it is, is no more than that; nay is still short of that which is thy due."

His words meaning what they did hurt me; they did indeed.

"My Lord General, with all gratitude and thanking thee with a most sincere heart for all that is past I cannot accept this commission—I cannot act in this matter."

"Sir John! Never before didst thou hesitate or hold back at command of mine."

"Nor, with the blessing of God, ever will again. But this thing I cannot do."

"Do I then understand that thou dost not approve the killing of the Chief Delinquent?"

"May God be with him in his hour of need. As to whether I approve or whether I do not is but a small matter to any but myself. But since thou dost ask I reply that if it be a hard and a cruel and a bitter thing it may serve as naught else can to forever bring to end this constant intrigue and disloyalty to the English people which seeks



to overthrow and destroy all that God, using us as His instruments, hath won for us and those who shall follow us. If the execution, the killing as you say, of the King, be the only thing that will serve this purpose and bring a righteous peace and a holy tranquility to this Kingdom I say let it be done; but I say it less gladly than I would offer my own life a sacrifice if thereby the same end might be reached."

"Well, then?"

"Why, my Lord General, even though these are my feelings yet will I not do this thing."

"But thou art a sworn soldier and must obey the orders of those holding command over thee under the pains and penalties of treason."

"I am, as thou sayest, a sworn soldier and I will obey all orders of my superior officers that are right and do so appear; but I pray thee that no such order as this may issue to me."

"And why not to thee as well as to another?"

"Because I shall not obey it; and if any man shall term me traitor for thus refusing, why—let him look to himself, my Lord General."

The Lord General's eyes flashed ominously.

"Colonel Baldwin, you do seem to have suddenly come to a strange way of thinking! Have we not waged a long and bloody war to secure liberty of conscience, nay, the reign of conscience in this realm, aye, and won it, too?"

"We have, my Lord General."

"Why then, look you, the conscience of the English people, reigning in righteousness free and untrammelled and operating under the guidance of our gracious God hath decreed the King's death, and further, that thou shalt make thyself accessory thereto!"

"And I refuse to obey."

"Dost thou believe in conscience and a free and governing conscience?"

"I do."

"But whose?"



"My own. No other man's shall dictate to mine."

"How long wouldst thou maintain discipline in thy regiment if thou didst permit every man to set up his conscience against that government which thou hast so wisely—to thy praise be it said—exercised over them?"

"My Lord General, I have never had any man of my regiment assume to set up his conscience against mine in this way. Nor would I advise that any should essay it. I have found my own to be all the conscience, and sufficient, that my regiment hath required nor do I think any will ever question it."

The Lord General smiled.

"Sir John, thou wert ever a headstrong and obstinate fellow having the advantage that thou art generally in the right; and although just now I feel that I would not yet do I love thee. The order shall not issue to thee; but hold thy force prepared to quell any disorder that may arise."

The which I did; going not near to Whitehall that dreadful day; and thus, by God's mercy, was spared the sight of the killing of Charles Stuart, a man who if he had but been a little other that he was might have reigned gloriously over the English people. His taking off was an awful horror to my soul; and yet it may have been, it truly *seemed* to be for the best that it was accomplished so; and may God grant that it was no mistake of man's.

The thing took such hold upon me that on the 1st February I obtained leave and came hither to compose myself; reaching the Mere only in time to receive the blessing of my dying parents. They had been suddenly and mysteriously smitten on the day of the King's beheading, with a disease obscure and which hath not yet been fathomed.

And both were smitten at once; and together, hand in hand, as they did ever walk through life, they trod the dark path that led them from a world they had lived in only to bless and make better. In life they were one and in death they were not divided. Peace to their ashes.

Despite the Christian faith and joy they showed on their



death-beds the shock to me was such that it seemed as if the waves of disbelief had suddenly broken through and were beating down and washing out the foundations of my trust; and for a few days so grievous was my state of mind that even their precious testimonies were shrieked and howled in my ears by the mocking imps of the Great Enemy of Souls as the vain babblings of those deluded, and worn and weakened intellectually by disease to the deceiving and distorting of the workings of their reason. God only knows the pain and pangs that come when the solemn assurances of a man's own loved ones are thus thrust misshapen and horrible in his face to drive him into Hell.

For days I would not, could not turn to Nell's letter, that precious stay and help to me in former troubles. It seemed a cruel and unfeeling thing to seek to draw even so sacred a thing between me and my grief.

But the God Whose dispensations we may not understand but which are ever and always of the tenderest love for us His poor helpless, crawling, blinded creatures, gradually found His way back to His place, His throne within my heart; and may He reign there for evermore. He hath given and He hath taken away; and blessed be His Holy Name. Amen, and Amen!

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### HE IS ORDERED TO IRELAND

BALDWINSHERE, 10th May, 1649.

Two months ago the Parliament by formal act made Oliver Cromwell Lord Lieutenant to go to Ireland to bring the misguided and rebellious people of that island to a proper and realizing sense of their condition before the Lord; and they have placed at his disposal a force of nine or ten thousand tried and approved soldiers godly men and true; of which our old Ironsides corps is at once the nucleus and the flower; and in that army I am to hold command as General, of a part of the Horse. This was arranged by the Lord Lieutenant's express direction; and I am back at the Mere to set in order my affairs; for, how long the campaign shall last no one knoweth.

This setting in order hath become the more necessary now that my father's death (and no less my mother's) has wrought great changes; and these must be agreed upon and settled. My brother William having succeeded as heir hath resigned his place as Colonel and will find all his time engaged in managing the affairs of the estate. With him will remain my sister Betty as housekeeper and chate-laine at least so long as he remaineth single.

How long that shall be no one knoweth; I did once think he would remain a bachelor all his life; but an intimacy hath sprung up between him and a daughter of the Lord Fairfax the which doth seem to promise more than usual permanency; albeit nothing can be got out of Will himself concerning it. He hath a fine scar from a sword cut in his left cheek, which, however, doth not disfigure the handsomest Baldwin I ever laid eyes on (amongst the males I mean), but doth rather enhance his manly comeliness; indeed, I do think so; and he hath a halting gait from a



hurt received at Naseby the which I hope shall in time pass away.

It was found that my mother had reserved from that which came from my grandfather Jennings enough to leave to my sister Betty to the value of £5,000, and to me £10,000. What my future may be I cannot tell. Much doth depend on the wish of my dear Nell when in God's providence we shall once more and for all the rest of our lives be brought together again. I have often had a feeling of late that I should prefer a new land, that which lies across the seas in our American Possessions, rather than remain here where events of late have made old England in some things distasteful to me. But I know not. It it is with God.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### HE WILL NOT HELP TO BUTCHER THE IRISH

THE MERE, 3d November, 1649.

THE army sailed for Ireland last August nine thousand strong requiring one hundred ships to transport it thither. The first work of the Lord General was to purge that part of our army which he found in those parts; and it was a most prodigious task; for there we found in the ranks many dissolute and debauched men having nothing of the fear of God before their eyes. The General however made short work of them and quickly sent the unregenerate ones packing. We had then, with what remained of those formerly here added to those we took with us, some fifteen thousand good soldiers and true men. Strict orders against pillaging or the disturbing of peaceable inhabitants were issued; the which orders having been disobeyed by some of our men two of the miscreants were hanged, in Dublin, by the sentence of the Lord General; and thereafter we had promise of no more of that scandalous behavior.

The memory of the awful massacres of '41, when the brutalized Irish Catholics under the leadership of their implacable priests carried out the behest of Antichrist and slaughtered many thousands of the unarmed and defenseless Protestants in that unhappy island was fresh in all our minds and we felt that the blood of the innocent cried aloud for vengeance. But we promised all peaceable people who should submit that no harm should come to them; only it was made known that we would not tolerate the practice of the rites of that bloody religion which had permitted and even encouraged those infamous cruelties. The work we were to do as I had my understanding of it, was to punish those who were guilty of the atrocious crimes of '41; and then, removing from them forever the power to



do the like again, establish a system of peace in the land which would bring tranquility to enable every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, save in the case as I have said of the Catholics, who have no consciences and do not worship God but idols of gold and stone and wood and brass and the spirits of human beings who, having died in the so-said odor of sanctity, they do set up to be prayed to as God alone should be.

The island is beautiful and fertile and with peace for every man to till his land or ply his vocation there should be abundant prosperity for all its inhabitants. The people, save where they have been transformed by their vile religion are frank, open, hospitable, of good nature and most kindly disposition; wherein arch cunning is so mixed up with pure simplicity and open-heartedness that it is impossible not to love them. Their women are for the most part lovely in heart, mind and person; with many of those qualities which are of the stuff of which heroines are made; there is in them I am sure much true nobility of character. Of the prelates and priests we found the two kinds belonging to every religion; some bigoted and cruel; and some with a seeming of simple faith in their creed but no power to detect or resist its errors; and to say truth, I was surprised to find some among them, aye many, who in spite of their religion showed at all times the grace that doth pertain to the true Christian alone. Why and how this could be hath ever been a riddle to me, at the which I marvel the more as I do think upon it the more frequently.

Taking ten thousand of his stoutest and best men the Lord General embarked upon the enterprise of reducing Tredagh, a seaport on the Boyne a score of miles north of Dublin as the crow flies. We of the Horse came over against the place on the 3rd September; which is ever regarded by General Cromwell as a fortunate day with him; the which showeth to me a weakness (but not a great one), since why should a particular day of any special month of the twelve be more fortunate for him or for any other



man than any other day? The rest of our army soon followed up, and we invested the place which we found was most strongly fortified and in which the Marquis of Ormond the pseudo King's Lord Lieutenant had placed the flower of his forces many of them being English, and Sir Arthur Ashton, an Englishman, in supreme command. Sir Arthur was a soldier of approved skill, having long followed the profession; and he seemed puffed up with the belief that he could stand against the Lord General—a thing which no man hath yet done to my knowledge. But he made, truly, a gallant fight; and once it looked that he would drive us off, when the Lord General seizing the buff-and-Bible standard rallied our disordered men and leading them once more to the breach we made a successful entry into the town and had the enemy at our mercy.

I would that things had been different in respect of the conduct of our army after it thus had the enemy in its power. I am not a squeamish man and in the heat of battle do always bear as hardly as I may upon my enemy, but I do not understand that spirit which doth possess a brave man and a gentleman in taking advantage of the helplessness of his foe to slay him. And this was what we did at Tredagh; putting to the sword, ruthlessly, the gallant fellows who had yielded themselves to us after making as brave and honest a resistance as men may be capable of. They could have done no better in even a good cause.

For three days after we had entered the town the butchery was kept up, until the entire garrison was destroyed. The General's orders were that none who was in arms should be spared; and that order (the which, with all his sternness and hardness in battle I did not think he would ever have made, for I have known him tender as a woman and of the most chivalrous consideration for the weak), that order I say was obeyed to the very letter; and at least three thousand of the armed enemy were sent to their long account with all their sins upon their heads; and that, too, after, as I have said, we had them at our mercy.

Nor was this all. For in the heat of that lust for blood



which the shedding of it in fierce and stubborn conflict doth ever breed in some men, there were many unarmed men and all the priests that could be found, and some women too, done to death with a ferocity at which my heart sickened and my soul revolted. I came near to breaking my sword across my knee and leaving the place; I did, indeed, come very near to doing it.

During all this shameful carnage I met not the Lord General although by times I heard his voice, and beheld him as he darted here and yonder busy with his bloody work. The day following the last murder (for, on my soul, I can call it nothing else), I was summoned to his presence. His first words to me were—

“Is this not a marvelous mercy of God, Sir John, that He hath vouchsafed to His unworthy servants?”

“Marvelous mercy, indeed, my Lord General,” I replied; “if a bloody butchery may be so termed.”

“How now, sir? What is this? What meanest thou, Sir John?”

“Just what I said, sir. I have been accessory to a most foul and bloody butchery and my soul cries out against me.”

“Sir, that which hath happened hath been a most righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood!”

“It becomes me not to gainsay aught spoken by thee, My Lord General, but I do hereby advise thee and whomever else it may concern that when God wishes again to work a ‘righteous judgment’ such as this, upon defenseless people, armed and unarmed, soldier and citizen, men and women, He will e’en have to leave out of the reckoning of His ‘unworthy servants’ whom He shall use for the bloody business, your very humble protestant, John Baldwin.”

The Lord General looked upon me with amazement and gathering wrath; but my eye never left his.

“I tell thee, Sir John, this is a great thing, which hath been done, not by Power and Might, but by the Spirit of God!”

“And I tell thee, my Lord General, that this is a foul



thing which hath not been done by the Spirit of God—it is a blasphemy to say it hath—but by a brutalized soldiery hot with the lust of blood, blind with a bigotry equal to that of the Catholics of '41 and drunk with vile rapine and cowardly carnage. Nor will the stain of it ever pass from the name of Englishmen."

"How dare you thus speak to me!" he thundered, purple with rage and awful in wrath as I had never seen him before.

"Dare?" I answered in kind. "Thou art excited, my Lord General, and hast forgotten to whom it is thou speakest. When, by thy leave, didst thou ever learn that there was a limit to what John Baldwin might dare when he felt himself in the right? Lord General though thou be thou shalt not talk to me of what I may or may not dare to say or do."

Having risen from his seat to greet me at my entrance he now again sat down and gazed at me with a look of stupor for many minutes while I stood regarding him steadfastly and almost praying I might be put to the test of what I might dare. His look gradually changed to one of most piteous yearning, as of a loving father whose son hath defied him.

"Sit thee down, dear lad; God knows, and thou knowest, that I love thee!"

"And God knows and thou knowest, My Lord General, that I have ever loved thee," and there was a break in my voice I could not control; for the past came back to me and the knowledge I had won in years of study of this man's character came upon me to plead for him.

"The blood of the innocent slain in '41, cries aloud from this very ground for vengeance, Sir John!"

"'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay,'" I replied.

"'Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe,' this is the law enacted by our God and promulgated by the hand of his servant Moses!"



"The statute hath been repealed, my General, by Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to Whom hath been given all power in Heaven and on earth."

He looked on me earnestly for a long time and his look was sad and troubled.

"What are you in this army for?"

"To fight God's battles; not to slay my disarmed adversary, not to butcher unarmed men nor to kill defenseless women."

"Thou art here to obey orders, sir!"

"I am here to obey never again an order such as was issued by thee here after we had taken the town, I care not who giveth it. I am here to kill and slay in fair honorable combat, and that shall I do in the service of my God when occasion requireth; but, mine enemy, being at my mercy, I will not slay at any man's behest."

"Dost thou not know that in this thou art mutinous and hath earned the punishment of the mutinous?"

"If any man doth feel called upon to punish me for being mutinous in that which I have said I do assure you my Lord General he hath my good leave to try to do so, whenever it may please him."

"But thou *art* mutinous!"

"I care not if I am. I am right, and that I will defend."

Then for a moment there was a pause, and silence.

"Breeds any other spot of ground on earth such gamecocks as are bred in our Fens? Thou canst go, Sir John! I'll not punish thy mutiny!"

"Nay," I said, rising to take my leave; "I beg that thou wilt do that which doth seem to thee to be thy duty. I would not have thee spare me because I am what I am. Nor do I shrink from any consequences of any act of mine—I ask no favor in this, my Lord General."

"Go, thou most incorrigible of men! Go, for thou art dangerous in that thou makest me love thee for the very splendor of thy errors. Go, and pray God to give thee a better mind."



“Aye, that will I; but if He send me one different from that I now have in this matter I’ll not accept it.”

A few days later the Lord General again sent for me and entered at length upon his ground for ordering the massacre at Tredagh, which was mainly to the effect that not only should the crimes of the Irish in ’41 be punished and the innocent blood then shed avenged, but such a blow should be struck as should forever after deter from rebellion those who fought against the purposes of the Most High God in His up-lifting of His people and the establishment of the true religion. To this I replied that there was a better way than by terror to teach the lesson; that I feared that men in God’s business were sometimes deceived as to the source of certain inspirations, which was a parlous thing; that no error could follow the practice and enforcement of the law of loving forgiveness which was taught by our Saviour; especially when the offenders were powerless to do further evil; and that if he were of a mind to continue his war in Ireland as he had begun it he should change the name of his soldiers from Christians to Mosaics, and forthwith grant me leave to return to England for I should be party no longer to such infamy.

To which he gave intimation that there was much in what I said; that he would prayerfully reflect upon it, and that he did not think it would be necessary to repeat the lesson of Tredagh. And when he left me I felt a joyful assurance that my righteous pleadings had prevailed.

But when we reached Wexford the same thing was done over again and I forthwith demanded leave to go home; which after some demurring the Lord General granted. And here I am, never to take up arms again save in a righteous cause righteously maintained.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### HE IS MADE PRISONER BY PRINCE RUPERT

BALDWINSHERE, 15th January, 1650.

FIVE years is a long time to wait for news of my dear one; and it is nearly five years since the blessed day on which she writ the letter that I wear in my heart and shall take with me to the world beyond, when I shall be released from my service in this. This thought of the long waiting did much oppress me after my return from Ireland—having then no occupation; for my old sports I found had lost their relish, and thus being at leisure the wearing weariness of it had time to prey upon my inwardness.

I had no doubts as to her enduring love for me. Nothing could ever shake my faith in that, save only an assurance from her own lips that she had changed her mind, and that I do know those lips will never give utterance to. But I was troubled as a man might well be with anxious fears as to her own well-being, as to what might be happening to her, so far away from me and among strangers with no one to say a kind word to her of that she had most at heart. While I knew that Sir Charles would never be able to shake her, neither in her determination to marry me nor in her love for and belief in me yet I did fear that by constant and ingenious attempts to work such mischief he might make her wretched, and her life an almost insupportable thing to her. I felt persuaded that this would Sir Charles essay; for he is a most obstinate man and set in his ways; and why the good God hath created obstinate men is more than I can understand; for of a truth they are a pest in this world.

There was ever with me and steadfastly remaining a hope that the Lady Priscilla would stand as a friend to me and my dear in our troubles; for she was never otherwise



than kind and indulgent to me and I had always the feeling that she had a most shrewd conceit of how matters stood between us and that while she might not wish, perhaps, to openly oppose her husband and by her actions defy him yet would she rejoice to see God's will the rather prevail. How far she might go in this direction I could only guess—but how could a mother see her loved daughter in such straits and not at least comfort her by the expression of her sympathy and soothing encouragement in her troubles?

Brooding over these things day by day and the longing to see my dear one once more growing to so great a heat that it was as a consuming fire in my breast, I finally, after a consultation with my sister Betty (who boldly says she will give me up to no one else on earth save Nell Hedges only) concluded I would make a journey to the Continent to search her out.

Casting about for ways to reach her I went to Bristol; and there I learned from friends who had been abroad that Sir Charles with his family had within six months been in the Low Countries; but precisely where, I could not be certainly assured of. At last, after overcoming some difficulties I chartered a ship of small dimensions such as are used by fishermen, the Master of which gave me to know that the waters of this part of the world were familiar to him and who undertook for a prodigious large reward to put me on the Dutch Coast, and, opportunity serving, to bring me back again if I appeared at a certain rendezvous at three months' date. He seemed an honest fellow and indeed I am persuaded that he was so.

We sailed on the evening of 10th December, the sky being lowering as if to snow, but the more favorable for our purpose in that we should be less likely in foul weather to encounter any of the ships which, it was said, the so-called King Charles II. had fitted out under the Prince Rupert as Lord High Admiral, to harry English commerce and aid the Marquis of Ormond in his efforts to establish the supremacy of the Stuarts in Ireland.

But the storm was a heavy one, to my mind, that night,



and none on board slept much, the dawning of the day finding us at sea and in an uncomfortable plight—wet, hungry and worn with toil and watching. The violence of the waves subsiding in a measure by noon and the wind shifting, if but slightly, in our favor, we made sail toward our hoped-for haven and some little headway. At the same time the sun shone out fitfully and albeit his gleams were weak and wintry they cheered our hearts and we took food.

Soon after a large ship hove in sight bearing down upon us; the which the Master, after much careful scrutiny declared was a man-of-war, and flying the royal English colors, as proved to be true as presently demonstrated when she came within hailing distance and demanded that we should lay to and give account of ourselves. I was for turning tail and making a run for the English coast but this the Master refused to attempt, saying that with the wind contrary we could make no success of it and that to try to do so would be but to draw the fire of the great ship and thus ensure the certain destruction of his vessel and it might be the loss of our lives. Instead, he made suggestion that he should endeavor to get off by pleading the character of his craft as in the fishing trade, if I should go below and remain there; and to this out of consideration for him and the others with us I was fain to give my consent; albeit with huge reluctance for I like not to turn my back and hide myself from any man.

From my cabin where I lay in such a vile atmosphere of fishy odors and the smell of tar and tallow as almost made me queasy, I heard the landing on our deck of a crew of searchers from the man-of-war and the colloquy with the Master, wherein he sought to show he had on board naught of contraband nature or anything that should be desired by the warrior; and to my thinking he told a very taking story and one which I made sure would work our instant release; but I was wrong.

Calling for our own crew the boarding-officer numbered and questioned them; then suddenly turning to the Master said sharply—



"Now then fetch me here your passenger."

"But I have no passenger—we be all honest fishermen."

"Fishermen all here may be; and honest when well watched I have no doubt; but there is one on board of you as big as any two I see here; he is an upright man in his carriage and looketh the soldier every inch of him. Have him on deck."

"Nay," protested the Master, "there is no such——"

"Then search the ship!" cried the officer, and I heard the tread of those so ordered approaching the open hatch to come down. So with no more ado I squeezed my way up and out and stood on deck where they regarded me with much amazement.

"I have no fancy, sir, to be caught like a rat in a trap; and indeed went below much against my own inclination. If we had been possessed of but a few arms there would have been no peaceful boarding here big as your ship is. And now, sir, what may be your business with me?"

"May I enquire as to whom it is I have the honor to address?" asked the officer, most civilly.

"You may, sir; and as I am not ashamed of my name I make bold to inform you that I am John Baldwin called by my friends and certain of the ribald, 'Big John,' and I hail from Baldwinsmere, in the Fen country."

"What art thou doing here?"

"Answering questions which look you, come mightily near to being impertinent, sir."

"Pardon me but it is my duty. May I ask your purpose in taking passage on this ship and what destination you hoped to reach?"

"I purposed to land on the Dutch coast."

"Thou art a soldier?"

"I have served."

"Dost thou belong to the Parliament's army?"

"Aye, my lad. And to the Ironsides. Hast heard of them?"

"Who has not?"



"There may be some who have not but who will, an't please God."

"On what business art thou engaged?"

"My own."

"Private business?"

"Private business."

"Of what nature?"

"Didst thou never hear of him who had his neck wrung because his curiosity was too prying?"

"But, sir, I am but performing my duty as a sworn officer of King Charles the Second."

"I never heard of the gentleman. Of what is he King, pray?"

"Of England, sir."

"That is he not, to my certain knowledge."

"But we are wasting time. I pray thee to tell me of your errand in these parts. If it be such as doth not involve thee in resistance to the King thou mayest go free and be permitted to proceed." (Here I saw the Master signal to me.) "If otherwise it must be my business to make you a prisoner."

"Art speaking of the same King as before?"

"The same."

"Why, then, why should I resist a King who hath no kingdom nor ever will have? But as to my errand, it is a private one—concerning only myself—and another. I am not here on business of state nor hath my errand aught to do for or against him you call King."

"I fear me I shall have to take you, sir, before the Lord High Admiral."

"And who is he?"

"The Prince Rupert, sir."

"I'll not go with you."

"Then we shall be compelled to use force."

"How many men have you?" I asked grinning.

"The one who has his pistol at your ear will suffice since to take you dead or alive is our business."

Sure enough, turning my head quickly I felt the cold



muzzle of the weapon on my temple and glanced in the dead gray eyes of a stout varlet who looked as if he would as lief shoot as not and only waited the word.

"Why then; look you, sir," I said to the officer, "I have great respect for a loaded firearm properly placed, having had experience of them, and I have a greater respect for the brains which tell me when to escape a peril too great for me to hope to overcome and have no wish to live to see them blown out upon the deck here. Say no more. Thy way is a taking one and I'll e'en with thee with all my heart."

"And brains," added the officer, smiling. "We shall have them with us, too."

"Why, yes, such as they are—they are all I have."

Coming to the great ship I was ushered with much seeming respect to a cabin in her hinder parts where sure enough sat Prince Rupert at a table poring over a chart. He seemed much engaged and deeply interested in something an officer was explaining to him in a low tone. He sat silent intently regarding the chart for a moment; then suddenly turning his face away from me whom he had not yet seen asked quickly—

"But what's amiss? Why are we standing still?"

"A prisoner hath been brought from the fishing vessel——"

At that he turned, and seeing me standing waiting jumped so impulsively from his seat that he sent charts and papers flying all over the cabin floor.

"Sir John Baldwin, by all the Saints!" he cried; "gentlemen, salute the bravest man and truest knight in England," which they all did—if I am the man.

"Your Highness, I am your very humble servant," said I, making my Court bow as I was taught by Northumberland.

"Very humble humbug! When wast thou ever humble to any man? Now am I glad to see thee. Art on thy way to pledge thy fealty to the King?"

"I know no King to whom I owe allegiance, your High-



ness. The King is dead—and for his death, its necessity and the manner of it, I am sorry, even though I fought against him and will against his house so long as I may.”

“Why then, I am disappointed; for I had hoped, seeing you here, that it were otherwise with you. But there; his late Majesty himself once did tell me thou couldst not be moved, thy mind having decided. But how came you here?”

“I made essay to reach the Dutch Coast on some pressing private business when your great ship bore down on me, a fishy-eyed scoundrel got a pistol to my ear before I was aware of it, and, so pressed, I am here, thy guest.”

“And right welcome, Sir John, always, in peace or war, at the pistol’s point, or the brim of the glass.”

“I have no desire to burden your hospitality for any great time, your Highness; and will thank you to give orders to have me put back on my own ship with free passage to the place where I would be.”

The Prince smiled.

“Nay,” he said; “by the ring thou wearest thou art prisoner to us in a double sense; and I cannot consent to part with thee so soon. Make a fitting place on board for Sir John,” he ordered; “he shall e’en be our guest for a time.”

And so it was. For four and twenty hours was I on board the *Flying Falcon*, for so his ship was named, and my treatment and tendance would have befitted a prince of the blood; the place of honor after Rupert at table being given me and all other things of the same consideration.

In the evening of the day upon which I became his unwilling guest the Prince gave orders for a sumptuous banquet at which all the officers of the ship were bidden with notice to appear in their most gallant attire. My belongings having been brought on board with me I appeared in the full dress of my rank and believe I may think I made no blur on the picture. My health was proposed by the Prince and drunk with cheers after he had given some account of things that have happened me; surprising me



marvelously with the familiarity he showed with my history. There was much mirth and jollity and good fellowship at the table and after all was over the Prince took me to his private cabin which mine adjoined, where, with wine and other good cheer we were alone, and at our ease we talked of many things. And a great love for the handsome gallant chivalric fellow grew strong in my heart, enemy though he be to those things for which I have fought and will, if I may, fight again.

Our battles having been fought over again and the future as well as the past having been discussed from our differing standpoints, wherein each did settle things to his own mind, I began to grow drowsy from the effects of my entertainment and the long evening when I was made suddenly wide-awake and full of interest by the Prince, who said carelessly—

“Now I bethink me, I saw old friends of thine at a country house near Paris, and only last week, too. They were my old good hosts once, at whose Hedge Hall I first met thee, years ago—Sir Charles Hedges, the Lady Priscilla and Mistress Eleanor—gad, man! there’s the handsomest she in Christendom, the Mistress Eleanor!”

“Aye, that she is.”

“Hast seen her lately?”

“Not for years, your Highness; but when last I saw her she had great beauty and there was that promise of more to come which the good God never giveth without meaning it.”

“Of a truth He meant it here. There was a gathering of the friends of the cause for which thou shouldst be engaged but art not, at the place I speak of; the poor widowed Queen Henrietta Maria was there, and the orphan whom thou shouldst acknowledge King, and many others including Sir Charles and his ladies.”

“Is Sir Charles then committed to him whom thou shouldst not style King?”

“Thou art a saucy rogue, Sir John, and I fear I must e’en hang thee to the yard-arm for our parting—if one



stout enough may be found. Sir Charles is a queer fish if thou wilt pardon my freedom in speaking of thy old neighbor; he is ever hovering about our people and yet never seems quite of them. Once there was a thought that he was in the employ of thy Huntingdon brewer,—nay, do not frown; Oliver hath greatness, but he hath a brewery, too, and that may not be gainsaid;—but the keenest watch upon him and his people failed to find in their actions aught to justify the suspicion. And while he doth not commit himself to the true and righteous cause he doth not show any warmth of sympathy with that of the Parliament. It is strange that he remains abroad if his feeling is against the King. Dost thou know how, in truth, he doth stand?”

“He is against the Stuarts, but hath reasons perhaps for keeping on terms with them.”

“On my soul, I do believe if I were heir-apparent he would come out boldly and show his colors for me. But not so do I judge the Lady Priscilla and the Mistress Eleanor, Sir John. Sir Charles shows me the most fondest favor, so much that were he not so stout and sturdy a knight, it might be called by a less pleasing name. His admiration for my poor, unworthy self, hath been the subject of gossip I am told. He hath gone to great lengths to win a regard which might have been warmer if he had not been so pressing in his assiduous devotion to me. Why, Sir John, he hath advanced me moneys, and no small sums, neither; but, I must say for him that he did it with great tact and delicacy. Hath he not a son with the Parliament’s army?”

“He hath; a colonel, and as good a soldier as ever drew sword. But you say the Lady Priscilla and the Mistress Eleanor——”

“Why, now, the Lady Priscilla, Sir John, hath ever been kind to me but with a most lofty air which hath kept me far from her, albeit without rudeness on her part; while as for the fair Mistress Eleanor, why, she is ice, man, ice! If she hath a heart I have never been able to reach it and thou knowest I usually find my way to a fair lady’s heart



if any can. But my warmest wooing hath ever failed to touch her. Nay, she is not ice! An she were, she would melt, for I do protest I have been so piqued by her coldness that I have pursued her with a warmth no other woman ever yet withstood and which would have melted any ice that ever came out of the North. Nay; she is not ice; she is marble and she hath no heart."

"You speak truly, your Highness," I said, quietly; "she hath no heart for she long ago gave it to me; and I have it, and hold it my dearest treasure; and shall, in this life and in that to come, as well."

The Prince looked first as if dumfounded, then as if a great light were breaking in upon him. Then he smiled most joyously and sprang forward and embraced me warmly with that boyish frankness which doth make him irresistible.

"And in giving it to thee she hath testified in the most triumphant way possible that she is all that the poets might sing of a woman. I am blind not to have seen long ago that there could be no one else worthy of her, and that the good God Who doth never work at hap-hazard hath made thee for each other and will never see His plan go crooked."

And then in his generous way Rupert paid me a thousand compliments and swore by more heathen gods than ever I had heard of before that, albeit he never relished defeat, he recognized that this time the better man was the winner and rejoiced at it. Then we paused and mused quietly for a long time.

"Sir John, tell me frankly for thou knowest thou canst trust me, were you on your way to her when my good-fortune made you my guest?"

"I was."

"Then I have rendered you a great service and am most glad I have. For you would never have left the Dutch Coast alive. Nay, look not so incredulous nor ask me why—I know what you do not know. I have good reasons which forbid that I should tell it you, but you may accept



my word for it and you know I would not deceive you. I shall land you on the English coast to-morrow; and be your best friend in doing so."

In vain did I remonstrate. He would neither tell me what insurmountable danger I would have met on the Dutch Coast (but I am persuaded he knew it was there), nor yield his purpose to send me back home.

"I shall probably see the Mistress Eleanor again within a week or so; shall I take her a message from you?"

"Why your Highness——"

"You are not afraid to trust me?"

"Nay—but would it not be cruel to send you, the slighted lover, with a message from the favored one?"

He laughed most mirthfully.

"My dear Sir John, the love I have for the Mistress Eleanor is like that the players do protest on the stage in the play-house—it is not like yours. I never meant her harm; she is too noble for thought of that. But as it is the business of your player to profess a love he does not feel, so it is the business of a Prince to make love to every pretty woman he may meet, and not mean it, neither. Go write your letter."

I would trust Rupert, he being on his honor, with my life. And so, although it was a bitter disappointment not to see her I wrote the letter and gave it him; and he landed me on the English Coast at an unwatched spot near Bristol and home I came.

Surely God is good to me. And yet I have served nearly as long for Nell as Jacob did for Rachel. And he was fooled after all. But that shall I not be.



## CHAPTER XXX

### HE HATH A MESSAGE FROM FRANCE

BALDWINSMERE, 1st March, 1650.

THE Prince Rupert is engaged in fighting the battles of the House of Stuart and is therefore mine enemy; meeting him on the field, if such should ever be my fortune, I shall use my utmost endeavors to administer unto him a most righteous defeat employing to that end all the fair means that an honorable man may use against his foe. That I have never met him nearly, in fair conflict, hath been a regret to me for I believe I could prevail against him; and that, too, I hope, without involving him in personal harm or damage; and to overcome Prince Rupert would be to triumph over the most accomplished and dashing and chivalrous cavalier of them all.

And with all this I am proud that I am Rupert's friend and he mine. Outside our quarrel as to matters of State and Church I would answer with joy a summons to any service in his interest, aye, even though it should involve the risk of my life. He is a true knight a gentle prince and an upright gentleman, who having pledged will ever keep his faith.

This morning there came to the kitchen door asking for food a man in the dress of a sailor, with some smooth tale to the servants of a return from a long voyage and being on his way to visit his mother, who, after he had been warmed and filled asked if the General Sir John Baldwin, of the Parliament's army, lived hereabouts and if he were to be got at; saying that he bore a message to him of great importance. I had him into the great hall where I sat toasting my shins and viewing with disrelish the mixed rain and snow that was falling outside. Happening to rise as he entered, he looked at me knowingly,



and I heard him say, in a low tone, to John Reed, who showed him in—

“Aye, that is he. There is no fellow to him in all England.”

I then saw he was one of the men who were with Rupert on the *Flying Falcon*.

“Well, sir?”

“He that sent me bade me first hand you this and ask if you had ever seen its mate?”

It was a copy, to a hair, of the ring Prince Rupert gave me years ago and which is still on my finger.

“I wear the mate. What then?”

“He bade me say that shortly after he last had the pleasure of companionship with your Honor, having business near the French capital he met there the one of whom you had talked and delivered the message with which you had honored him; and that of all the pleasures he had ever known none surpassed that of witnessing the joy with which that message was received; for it was manifestly of a nature which is seldom given outside of Heaven; that for reasons which may appear to your Honor without the setting forth by him or his messenger there could be no response in written form, but he bade me say that the person receiving your communication had enjoined upon him the duty of conveying to you the assurance that the treasure which is yours is safe, and will be so kept until you shall demand it in person; that it is guarded as one would guard his life; that no one shall ever hope to have it but you only and that it daily earneth interest and when yielded up to you will far exceed that which it was when first it became yours; that though the time hath been long and weary yet it doth now seem that you shall not lie out of its enjoyment for a great while longer; that the person having charge of it doth have a lively hope that before many months shall elapse that person shall render it up to you in England with, in all respects, a faithful accounting. That it were better you should not again rashly essay to reach it where it now is, but should wait,



with that same splendid patience you have ever witnessed; for in God's own good time it shall be brought to you so surely as He reigneth over all things in this as in the world to come. That commending you to the tenderest love of that most loving Father Who hath so faithfully watched over you and that which you hold most dear on earth the person referred to begs you to receive as a sacred memorial, reminder and pledge, the small packet which I hand you; with strict injunction that you give what it contains back to that person when next you meet; with the assurance that to that person it shall be more precious than ever from having been once more for a time in your keeping. This message was I taught to say by rote and so give it."

I gave the fellow a handful of gold and dismissed him, and going to my chamber examined the packet he had fetched me. It held the little twisted serpent ring I had given Nell so long ago, the ring that Rupert had stolen and lost and which I had restored to her the day I told her of my love for her; and with it there was a lock of golden hair with a copper tint where the sunlight fell upon it. I kissed them a thousand times, put them in the locket with the letter; and on my knees thanked God for His goodness.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### HE TAKETH SERVICE AGAINST THE SCOTCH AND THE PRETENDER

THE MERE, 20th December, 1651.

FOR the joy that fills my heart I can scarce write a word in this my journal to-day. For to-day I am the happiest man on earth and yet so good is our God to me, not so happy as soon I shall be and forever after. For on the coming blessed Christmas Day, the birthday of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I shall be—

But there are other things the which must be set down here before I go further.

The Lord General Cromwell returned to England on the last day of May of last year from his bloody conquest of Ireland and by the middle of the following month (June) I received his commands to go to London to meet him.

I cannot permit myself to attempt to conceal my chagrin that the Lord General, the man whom I have so truly loved and do love, and who hath so truly deserved my love in so many ways, that he I say should have made his conquest of Ireland in the manner that he did, by the wholesale butchering of thousands of those who fell into his hands and having so fallen were defenseless before him. It was a foul and bloody business and there's an end of it; and to my mind no less foul because it was avowedly done for the building up of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

If all the thousands he hath slaughtered in Ireland had been slain in fair and open fight it would have been different; and the blessing of the God in Whose name it was done might reasonably have been expected to rest upon the matter to the glory and honor of His cause forever and ever. But as it was otherwise I cannot discern aught of



godliness in it. Indeed it is as though the Lord General, His instrument, having become wildly fierce by reason of the stern business he had been engaged in had transcended his instructions and had usurped the power placed in his hands to work an awful crime; wreaking a blind and senseless revenge upon those unable to resist; and in a way to shock all sense of manly fairness and to stain the soul almost beyond the hope of any future washing out.

I have no sympathy with the papists and do abhor and will resist to the hour of my death all their hellish conspiracies against the English people; but I may make a distinction between the artful and devilish leaders and their poor ignorant and deluded dupes. Meeting those leaders in battle I should show them no mercy so long as they were in arms and fighting; but even them I should not slay once they had yielded themselves up. But in the case of the dupes surely they, helpless in our hands, should be spared. Shall a poor ignorant and well-meaning man who, in his efforts to reach the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, hath been led astray, be dealt with as only those who deceive and mislead others to their betrayal should be? Hath this poor man committed a crime worthy of a cruel and shameful death because he hath been brought into error, he being unable to discern that error?

Nay. I say that were I an Irishman and a papist as I am an Englishman and a Protestant the manner in which Oliver Cromwell and the people of England have waged war upon my people would serve but to strengthen my heart in the cause in which I and my neighbors had suffered; and never, so long as I lived, would I give up my religion, error though it might be and that too even if I had come to see it error.

Nor can I believe that God intended such monstrous savagery to be used in the cause of His true religion. Nor do I believe that His blessing shall ever be upon its results; but I am persuaded that the effect of this bloody business shall be to ever keep the people of that unhappy



island faithful to that error which hath been the cause of or pretext for all the awful suffering that hath been visited upon them.

And yet with all this feeling I have not been able to enter into judgment with the man under whose hand all these crimes were wrought. He hath been so loving and so tender, so pure and so unselfish, so lofty and so righteous in his aims and purposes and so great in his performance that I cannot judge him. And truly to do so belongeth to God only! There let the matter lie; when the dread day shall come that the scroll of his life shall be unrolled by the Recording Angel and spread before the eyes of the Most High God may the Lord Christ appear as Oliver Cromwell's Mediator and Advocate, and pleading the merits of His sacrifice for the putting away of all sin secure for him that mercy which the purest justice of man would most surely deny him.

And so no more of this, forever; let me forget it.

Going to London I was received by my Lord General with all those distinguishing marks of his loving kindness he hath ever showed toward me. In all our converse only that part of our past was touched upon which pertained to our intercourse in England.

I found him much changed in many respects. His outward seeming was that of a man who had suffered much from bodily illness and in his eyes methought I read the story of inward heart-and-soul-searchings, maladies and discomposure, which had left him a deeper if a sterner man. But those eyes! those most wonderful eyes that ever in a man's head met mine! There was never absent from them that steadfast look of absolute conviction of the necessity and the righteousness of the great work to the performance of which he hath been so significantly designated by the hand of God himself. They shone deep and lustrous but yet unfathomable, and fixed and determined in their shadowing forth of the great soul burning through them. They seized and held me as they never did before, so that I felt at times as if I were merely the



creature of the will of the man whose commands they spoke forth.

The Lord General kindly had me to an evening meal with his family, at the Cockpit, the stately and sumptuous home with which the Parliament had provided him. Our converse there was of things belonging to the dear old Fens, and that old life there, so precious to us all, wherein with tranquil cares we grew in years and knowledge, little dreaming, any one of us, of the purpose and work for which, ripening, this quiet strong man among us was being trained and fitted. What a wild and stormy gulf of surging scenes sweeps and heaves and tosses between that time and this.

The meal being ended and thanks returned, and after the chanting of a Psalm, the General withdrew me into a more private room, where he had provision of strengthening cheer, the which we used in moderation.

"If thou couldst understand, my loving friend, how my bowels have yearned to have restored the sense of thy companionship thou wouldst be able to measure a little of the joy that holds me now that thou art once more with me."

"My dear Lord General," I replied; "that I have, unworthy as I am, so won your affection I count a thing to prove my right to a pride almost unseemly in a Christian. Next to my dear father, now in Paradise"—

"In Heaven, you mean John. Your noble father is in Heaven."

"Whether there or in Paradise, my Lord General, he is where he is happy and where God hath placed him and it is Paradise or Heaven to him and there need be no argument as to the name we shall give it. Next to him, I do say in all honesty, thou hast held not only my respect and confidence but my gratitude and love, too, more than any other man on earth."

"Thou didst nurse my dying boy—nay, the pain and pangs of his taking away from me are still fresh and ache; and so it will ever be till I am freed from my bondage Here and go to meet him There. Through all the



years that have passed since thou, as the angel of God, didst minister to my poor boy the anguish of my bereavement hath ever been with me and hath come to me in battle and in peace in storm and calm alike. And there was even a time when, truly, I wrestled with the temptation to lay impious hands upon my life made almost insupportable by this chastisement. But, praise be to His Holy Name, He stayed me, and e'en spared me to use me for His purposes. And I have learned to endure. What fool am I that I should set up my poor little grief between Him and me so that I may no longer see His face. Nay, Sir John, I have learned how to be abased and, too, how to rejoice; I have been taught how to abound and suffer need, how to be full and how to be hungry; and it was the inward conviction going to my soul that this must be made so that saved my life at the time of which I speak; indeed it was."

And for a time he sat silent; with a strange and solemn aspect in the which I thought I read an uplifting of his soul, a precious grace sent to him, by his God, through suffering. But at last, with a sudden arousing, he began to speak in a changed and brisk and business tone—

"There is a call again, Sir John, for thee and thy good sword. The wiles of Satan have won over those in Scotland who should be on the side of the Lord and they have been deluded to an evil attempt to thwart the will of the Most High. They have given promises to the young Charles which will bring that Prince from his foreign retreat where he had far better remain, and they have conspired to crown him with the consecration of Kirk and Covenant, as King of the Three Kingdoms; and are making ready with an army to be commanded by our old friend and comrade, David Lesley, misguided man! not only to maintain him in his title and prerogatives in Scotland, but to undertake as well the conquest of England, too, in his behalf. What think you of that, Sir John?"

"Truly that they are a most froward and perverse generation. But then what may you expect of a people who



go half-naked on their sheep-shanks and feed on oats, like horses?"

"Nay, jest not Sir John; 'tis a serious business and mighty pressing at this moment."

"Why, then, my Lord General, if that be so here sits John Baldwin, ever a sworn soldier of the Lord God and ready to fight His battles; and here sleeps his sword ready to leap from its sheath in that behalf, at thy command."

"Spoken in all godliness and righteous zeal."

"Why, look you, my Lord General, if the men of Scotland in their rash haste to advance the cause of their Kirk and to compel all men to come to their view do undertake the restoration of a Stuart to the throne of England then all that has been won by our fighting and that hath been bought by the blood of His Saints is again put in peril; and how may I withhold my hand which should be bared to stay their wicked intent? Have we so hardly achieved in all these years the civil and religious liberties of this people now to weakly yield it all up because the ambitions of these devil deluded Presbyterians will be better served by the restoration of those whom God hath thrown down? Nay, thou needest not ask as to what John Baldwin hath to say in that case; he is here ready as he ever hath been, to fight for God and His people."

I was appointed again to command of horse; and to make my entry brief (for I do grow impatient for the joy that awaiteth me) I went, with Oliver Cromwell, through all the recent campaigns; wherein, with the stout old Ironsides and other good soldiers of the Lord we smote His enemies hip and thigh; pausing betimes to permit the fulminations of our preachers to penetrate and pulverize and fertilize Scotch minds and hearts, then going forth again, with the sword of the Lord and of Gideon—and thus did we work righteousness and spread His Gospel among that perverse and petticoated people. From Dunbar to Worcester the struggle was a hard and a bitter one but by God's grace we triumphed, and the Pretender hath been



hustled off to his foreign friends again even before his crown had become warm to his head.

It hath ever been my habit and custom to get banged about in battle, but my hurts were not great in this Scotch campaign—a sword-thrust at Dunbar, and a shot-wound at Worcester with a stout buffet over my hard head when with Major General Lambert we drove the malcontents from a stronghold north of the Forth, were the sum total; and I permitted neither of these to keep me off my horse's back when the moment of action came. Three hundred miles we chased the flying Charles in the one month of August last, then to wipe him out forever at Worcester. A glorious campaign, filled with rapid and unwearied effort and brilliantly crowned at the end. And all the glory is our God's.

Then back to London with my Lord General to witness all the great honors he had so sturdily won and that were paid him by the people he had so faithfully served under the inspiration and guidance of Him in Whose Name he did it. From Aylesbury to London he was escorted by the great men of England while shouting crowds of grateful people lined the way and salvoes of artillery filled the air with a constant and a deafening roar. The Parliament hath voted him £4,000 a year and hath set aside Hampton Court for the residence of the greatest man England ever hath produced, bar none.

And yet hath Oliver Cromwell many grave and serious faults (for I would not paint him as a court poet might a monarch as being a god on earth) and it may be that his chief defect is his obstinate conceit in his own opinion and judgment, than which there can be few things more lamentable in a man. In many a man this might so set him upon having his own way that he shall never concede reason in the views of others; and if such a man be not in a sinful state he is surely in a parlous, and should look well to himself lest he go fatally astray. It hath been my fortune more than once to show the Lord General that he was in the wrong and bring him to amendment, humble



man as I am; and I trusted the lessons thus taught him had been salutary. But, truly, he was ever the most difficult I have had experience with to teach reason to. And yet in every case he did yield; this to his credit; for nothing so becomes a man as a ready willingness to show respect to the judgment and opinions of others.

It was while we lay near to Musselburgh before the affair at Dunbar and were harassed by the enemy and no less by disease and a scarcity of food, that a fellow of most villainous appearance, and calling himself the Rev. Hosea Cramworth, came to my command with a showing of authority to minister to my men in spiritual things. Of a truth I never saw the equal of the brutish face he had upon him, unless, indeed, it were that of Bully Ben. He was oily and of approved sanctimonious appearance, albeit to my mind rather too much so, and had a most ready quickness to shift from what was meant to be an ingratiating manner (but which was to my apprehension too much of the nature of greasy sycophancy) to a bold and bullying demeanor when he found it served his ends, or thought it would do so; and withal he was wordy, wordy, wordy, with a great bull's bellow which filled the camp with its roaring.

I do not mean to say that he could not preach, for he could, glibly, and in his way eloquently; but there was ever in his discourse the sound as of a false note; and strive as I did I could not, either when listening to him or when regarding his mean little eyes (which had a way of shifting and never looked a look of true manliness) free myself from the feeling that he was a hypocrite—a wolf in sheep's clothing. He was objectionable to me because of his too frequent habit of quoting his texts from the minor prophet Hosea, after whom he was named, and making such literal and coarse application of them as revolted me. Still he came with the Lord General's authority, who sent with him a note of warm commendation; and I could do no less than tolerate him even though it irked me to do so.



But I did so till one day when it came to pass that my orders for certain camp duties and military exercises came in conflict with His Reverence's plans to expound a text from his favorite prophet.

Now God knows, that unworthy as I am yet am I His servant and with the deepest regard for His word and its ministers; I believe I have shown that I am truly bound to His cause and faithful to endure in the same. But it hath ever been my custom to require of my men that they shall perform their spiritual service so as that neither in the time used for the occasion nor in the effect it may have upon them as to their soldierly qualities shall it lessen their fitness and readiness to fight God's battles against His enemies in the flesh on this earth and presently over against us. And whereas I have sometimes found in some a readiness to shirk the hardness of the physical exercises and duties which are necessary to produce good fighting men, in favor of the easier and pleasanter occupying of their time with listening to the discourses of the preachers, I have been somewhat swift to bring such offenders to a realizing sense of the chief business for which they are kept in the field. My feeling hath ever been that the Lord will not insist that a man shall turn tail while the fighting with His enemies or the preparing for it is going on in order that he may seek a secluded and quiet spot where he may, with others or alone as may be, pour out His soul to the God Whom he doth serve; in other words I have ever felt that there is a time to fight as well as a time to pray and that it is well that the two shall not become mixed nor confused in the minds of the soldier. God can well do without the prayer if, at the moment, the soldier is engaged in mightily resisting or smiting His foes in the flesh.

To put it briefly, I found that my orders and the Reverend Hosea's plans did conflict and that the preacher-man was so emboldened to feel that the Lord General would back him that he had no hesitation in advising my men that, as their spiritual guide, his authority over them was



greater than mine. Learning this I sent for him and inquired of him concerning the matter. He was of a most offensively defiant manner saying that he had been called to this ministry, that he had been commanded to set the trumpet to his mouth to call men to righteousness; he reminded me that we were engaged in fighting God's battles and that in such a war His chosen prophets were more to be considered than the vain men who wielded merely carnal weapons; and warned me that I should not interfere with the Lord's anointed. It was a hard thing to control my temper and speak softly to the fellow, and yet, as became me, I did so.

"Beware," he cried blatantly, "beware of hindering in his work one whom He, our God, hath called and chosen."

"I am truly anxious that I shall not err in this respect, sir, and trust I may not do so in this case. You do truly believe that the Lord hath called you?"

"And who are you, vain man of war, that you should question it? I have here the credentials which testify thereto and the Lord General's approval of my coming hither to lead you, to nourish you in all godly apprehension and to inspire your hearts with righteous zeal in His great Cause. Thou canst not doubt it if thy heart be honest and true to Him."

"Why, now, Mr. Cramworth, I am ever fearful of trusting to my own weak judgment in matters high and weighty; and I feel and know that our Lord hath done many marvelous things; but I am e'en a man, and must speak my mind, which is that if He hath truly chosen you as His mouthpiece here is a greater marvel than any other I have met in all my life."

"Beware of blasphemy!"

"I say it in all reverence; and add in the same spirit that if the work had been put in my hands it had been much better done, I warrant you. How came it that the Lord was so hard put to it that He chose such a man as you to His work?"

"Thou art besotted in the vanity of thy strength and



comeliness. Proud man, know that God shall pull down thy high stomach!"

Now I had been most civil and polite to him albeit it was hard to be so, but when he began to abuse me I felt my wrath rising within me. Still I held my peace, silently regarding him; the which seemed to embolden him even more.

"Know thou, stiff-necked and froward toward His Saints, that thou shalt be brought low. A horse is a vain thing for safety neither shall he deliver any by his strength."

"Why, now, sir, that is doubtless true; and yet may it also be true even if it be not so set down by the Psalmist that neither shall there be found salvation to Israel in the braying of an ass."

"Thou art puffed up and perverse because of thy great strength and prowess in battle; yet are these things as nothing in His sight. For know thou, O rash and vain meddler with things that are too high for thee, that the Lord taketh no pleasure in the legs of a man."

This was too much; I had patiently endured his sauciness, and with soft words had striven to turn away his foolishness; but when he began to quote scripture against my legs I felt that the time had come to close him up.

"Hark ye, sirrah—you may go on with your preaching and praying here so long as it doth not interfere with the work upon which we are engaged. But if I find that you are drawing my men away from their duty as soldiers I shall send you out of the camp. This is the last word. Go."

And he went; and yet the very next day I found that he had chosen, as if of deliberate purpose, an hour for preaching which was of imperative necessity for other uses and had encouraged some few of my men to leave their proper employ to go to hear him. I said nothing on hearing this but went to the meeting and found him preaching on the XXXth verse of I Proverbs: "They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof."



Taking a place in his rear where he saw me not I learned that I was a son of Belial, a boasting, bullying Goliath, a false traitor to God's Cause, and that I was about to be pulled down by the Lord's anointed; with an intimation, of mighty smooth modesty, that he was the one chosen to perform the work. I saw by the faces of the men that they were not impressed against me; as they were, for the most part, grinning mischievously; and so I did but reach out and, seizing him by his great ear led him gently from the spot. He grunted and snorted most loudly and wriggled with great vigor, but I had such firm hold that he saw that to get away from me would be to lose his ear. I took him to the confines of my camp and contenting myself with hastening him over the line with the toe of my boot I bade him return no more.

"You shall hear from the Lord General!" he threatened; but I turned away, leaving him rubbing his ear and other parts by turn while traveling with all speed towards the General's quarters.

In an hour I did hear from the Lord General. He came in person; and mighty hot he was. I received him with all due courtesy and set wine before him, but he brushed it angrily aside.

"How, now, Sir John—hast lost all respect for the Cause in which we are engaged? What mean you by your treatment of the Rev. Hosea Cramworth?"

"Nothing that I need trouble you with, I take it, my Lord. It is a mere matter of discipline and meaneth only that if Mr. Cramworth entereth my camp again he shall be flogged at the cart's tail and soundly ducked in the nearest pond for his soul's good."

"But sent I him not to you?"

"You did; but doubtless under a misconception of his true character; for he is a mischievous marplot and hypocrite is written all over him."

"Judge not, that ye be not judged."

"Nay, I judge not. The Lord hath done that and spared me both the trouble and the temptation; for He



hath writ His judgment in the fellow's face and the slouch of his seeming."

"But I tell you he is a man of God."

"Then am I not, my Lord General."

"He hath brought me precious testimonies from many, of the most approved godliness, showing that he is a chosen vessel."

"If they show that he be chosen to honor then are they doubtless forged; if to dishonor then am I ready to add my voucher thereto."

"Thou art mad, Sir John."

"If you mean that I am wroth that my General should allow himself to be so deceived then you are right. If you mean that I am angry, with a righteous anger that such a Satan's cast-off should be permitted to blaspheme God's holy name and bring it into derision you are right again."

"Sir John," said the General, and by this time he was in that still passion wherein his voice sunk to a low and even tone and his eyes blazed, the which is his most dangerous mood; "Sir John, this is not the first time that thou hast dared to withstand me and I am weary of it. This shall be the last time. Thou dost seem to me like one in whom I have been mistaken, for I have ever believed till now that thou wert a faithful and a true soldier of the great Cause. But I see that I have misjudged thee and that thou art, as Mr. Cramworth himself doth charge, not at heart a true soldier of Christ. And," his face changing to a most sad mournfulness, "it is a knowledge that I do believe will break my heart, indeed I do."

"My Lord General," I replied softly; "may I say to thee that not only do I deny thy right to judge me in this matter but that I shall not permit it; that there lives no man on earth who shall judge me thus whether his name be Hosea Cramworth or even Oliver Cromwell? God knoweth my heart, but the man that shall take it upon himself to declare it to be other than I do say it is shall answer to me, and no protection of place or long nourished



love and affection shall keep me from my accounting with him. Hast thou become God, Oliver Cromwell, that thou dost so enter into judgment with me?—for no one but God shall.”

The Lord General stood silent for a time, wrapping me in the flame that so glowed from his eyes that in truth he seemed a very god; then they grew softer and more kind.

“John! John! I have done thee a wrong to doubt thee! Thy whole life hath been devoted to His work and thou hast wrought ever faithfully and valiantly. Nay, I was wrong angry and hasty. But in that thou dost assume to set my orders at defiance and to pick and choose which thou wilt have of those chosen of God to preach His word and declare His will and feed these His sheep, rejecting him whom I have sent to thee, thou doest thyself, me, and the Cause, a heinous wrong—it must not be. Hosea Cramworth is a godly man, and thou must receive him.”

“If I do, my Lord General, it shall be to the cart’s tail and the horse pond! I will *not* have him here—and I speak it with all due respect to you and reverence for the calling and Cause he doth disgrace.”

For a moment the Lord General was the most terrible bodying forth of uncontrollable wrath I ever beheld. The veins stood out on his forehead and swelled in his neck as though they would burst. His eyes burned and shot forth fire. His jaws were firmly clenched till his mouth seemed naught but a pale blue line. And such was his aspect when he strode from my tent and mounting his horse rode off, without a word.

A few days later I learned that Mr. Cramworth had been sent to preach the blessed Gospel to the papists in Ireland; whereat I was greatly rejoiced. For I have a lively hope, knowing that people as I do, that my gentleman will receive his deserts at their hands, in due season.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### THERE COMES A SOUND OF WEDDING BELLS

THE MERE, 23d December.

IN forty-eight hours I shall be made even happier than I am now (and how can that miracle be performed since I am now as happy as a man can be? and surely have no capacity for more—and yet do long for it) for on Christmas Day at 12 of the clock, at high noon, in the great hall at Hedge Hall, the Mistress Eleanor Hedges will become the Lady Eleanor Baldwin and enter upon her reign as such—not over my heart for there hath she ever reigned Queen, supreme after God Himself.

It hath all been arranged. The Lord General, notwithstanding the loss of his beloved son-in-law, General Ireton, less than a month ago, will give us his presence bringing with him his daughter Mary, a maid of only fourteen years. He hath made a sacrifice to come as his note doth testify:—

“My dear and loving Lad,” he writes, “God doth in His wisdom so mix up grief and joy that we may scarce tell which He wishes we should feel the most. Here have I but just come, as might be said, from the fresh made grave in which we laid all that is left of that noble pure-hearted gentleman, my loving son, Henry Ireton—(and, truly, my heart weeps at thought of our loss)—when, on the heels of this great calamity cometh your letter bidding us to your wedding! Fain would we stay here within our hushed chamber to feed upon sweet and sad memories of him that is gone (but sad only that he *is* gone) and pray to God for strength to bear up under His hand. And yet we know that He hath laid it upon us in love only, for He is Love.

“And being Love doth He invite to sorrow, alone? Shall



Love say that the mouth shall ever be in the dust and never be filled with laughter? May it not be that He doth so mix the two opposite blessings—(for so are they both)—with the purpose that we shall not faint and fall utterly under the grief, nor lose all sense of the dignity and responsibility of the life He hath given us for wise use by an unchanging round of its joys? Summer follows winter; the light comes swiftly after the darkness; the singing of birds succeeds to the roaring and shrieking of the bitterest storm; and He hath not made for the heart of man a leaden case to weigh it down forever, for then could it never leap and throb at touch of His love.

“So we shall be at thy wedding; my daughter Mary shall come with us and, since the Mistress Eleanor will have it so, we shall fetch also the Rev. Dr. Browning, Bishop of Exeter, to join you both in bands which only Death shall part. Look for us on the 24th, early in the day.

“Dear Lad, how could we show ourselves worthy of His mercies did we hang back at this time to feed our selfish grief when thou dost call on us to come to rejoice with thee in thy life’s crowning happiness? Thou, who hast been in our heart since thou wert a youth filled with noble aspirations, and who hast spent all the rest of thy life in more than realizing them, at cost of toil and danger and perils blithely borne and braved like one born to show the world what God meant a man should be; thou who hast been with us, ever loyal, ever chivalrous, ever buoyant and courageous in the hour of trial and temptation and sorest need, as well as in the hour of the glorious triumphs, which God, through us, hath wrought?

“Nor shouldst thou fear that we shall come to cast a shadow with our woe on thine espousals. Nay, it shall be otherwise. Paying, always paying that which is the due of the one who hath gone from us we shall not rob him who remains, but shall come with hearts singing with his joy and thrilling with prayers for the best that God can give to man, for thee and thy sweet bride.”



A word or two only, of other things must serve; for I am in no frame to drag this weary quill across the page when things are as they are.

Sir Charles Hedges died very suddenly last April near Paris. He was a man of full habit, fond of the pleasures of the table, with a noble and good heart but of strong will and choleric. He had just dined plentifully when, going to his chamber, some sort of omission or commission on the part of his servant greatly enraged him. In his anger the blood went to his head and he fell to the floor, and after six hours of hard and heavy breathing died without regaining consciousness, in spite of all the leeches could do. Peace to his ashes. They rest in France.

So soon as they could arrange their affairs and make the journey in safety Nell and the Lady Priscilla returned (in September) to Hedge Hall where Charley awaited them; and here I had my treasure returned to me again (according to the promise sent through Rupert) a thousand-fold more precious than ever before. Surely God hath blest me far beyond my merits and I owe Him my most constant service for all the rest of my days, and chiefly for this great mercy.

I cannot write of that sacred meeting with my dear. It hath a delicacy and a holiness that must not be profaned by the showing of it to other eyes.

The nobility and the gentry of all the countryside are bidden and will be here. The preparations have been on a mighty noble scale, and the day after the wedding we come to the Mere. What hath the future for us? Love and joy and peace in each other we know.

All else will come, as that also comes, from God.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE PRINCE'S COUP AND THE LORD GENERAL'S CHECK

THE MERE, 4th March, 1652.

ALL went well. The guests came as bidden, the Lord General and Mistress Mary with the Reverend Dr. Browning under escort of fifty of the General's own Life-Guard, all good and true soldiers, as hath been proved; and making a mighty gallant show.

The great hall at Hedge Hall was most bravely drest for the occasion; the nobility and gentry filling the part near the specially erected altar where the ceremony was performed and our good people from the two estates and that of Sir Geoffrey crowding the rest to the doors. Colonel Thomas Templeton supported me and as the great organ (poor Sir Charles's fond pride!) pealed from the gallery above, the Bishop took his place and we followed. We thought to have a quiet wedding—but there came a variety to give it spice.

All had gone forward with steady decorum (save that my heart did beat fit to break my ribs while Nell was as demure and cool as if she were used to it) till the Bishop required—

“Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?”

Charley took his sister's hand as had been arranged, when a voice cried “Hold!” and a most gallantly attired gentleman stepped quickly forth from behind a hanging tapestry at our left and striding forward, bent with courtly grace to Charley, saying, “By your leave, fair sir!” and falling on his knee before Nell, with head thrown back and curls a-flying, cried—

“I crave the boon of the Mistress Eleanor; honor an unworthy Prince with permission to give the Queen of all



lovely and sweet ladies to the King of all brave and chivalric gentlemen. For this have I dared, and shall dare, all things."

It was Rupert.

Never was there fairer picture. The noble debonair Prince, in the flower of his manhood, his cheek flushed and his bright eyes flashing and dancing, his magnificent attire setting forth in glorious splendor the most engaging person in all England, Nell, blushing to such enhancement of her radiant beauty as I never dreamed possible, the Bishop in his vestments, pausing in decorous and restrained surprise, the throng of brilliantly attired ladies and gentlemen with smiling faces filled with a sparkling, wondering joyousness.

The Lord General half sprang to his feet from the crimson chair in which we had seated him, but at sight of my upraised hand sank back again.

A swift and smiling glance passed between Nell and her brother as he let go her hand and it fluttered like a snowy dove toward the Prince who first pressed it to his lips and then gently brought it to the Bishop, coming from whom to me it clasped mine with that sweet and loving trust no other hand than a dear wife's can ever convey; and I had great ado to restrain my mad impulse to cover it with kisses—a proceeding which would I fear me, have sadly interfered with the progress of things which could not go too swiftly for me.

The first to salute the bride was thy grandfather (who begs to remind thee that it is to him thou art indebted for the grandmother) then the Lord General, with a grace of demeanor I never saw in him before; then Rupert knelt and kissed her hand once more, but, rising, was inspired at sight of her blushing loveliness and boldly attacked her lips; and then the rest of the happy friends.

And the Lady Priscilla wept while she clung to me and assured me it was the crowning of her fondest hopes—though why that were a thing to weep over I cannot understand nor hath she explained; and Betty wept—great, co-



pious, beautiful weeping was Betty's the while she wrapped and hid Nell in a mighty and most comprehensively obliterating embrace and found something big enough to fill up the sweep of her loving arms when she turned to her unworthy brother.

The people below cheered and the organ above filled the hall with great volumes of melody, while the gentry came thronging about us with gracious wishes; and at the first interval in the flow of them I slipped away and, beckoning Ned Taber, took him to a smaller room where I gave him a few brief instructions and he hurried from the Hall.

The wedding banquet lasted till late in the afternoon and then (the great hall having been cleared meanwhile) followed the ball which lasted till late at night.

In the first minuet Prince Rupert had Nell to his partner, I had Mistress Mary Cromwell, the Lord General danced with the Lady Priscilla and Charley with my sister Betty; in the second the Lord General danced with Nell, Rupert with Mistress Cromwell, Tom Templeton with Betty and the sweet Lady Priscilla with me.

Now there was a great deal of thinking going on behind the faces which there seemed full of pleasure only and with no room for serious cogitation. The Prince and the Lord General had borne themselves toward each other most characteristically; the Prince's easy gayety of manner was but just tinged with a laughing mischievous defiance, while the Lord General was a shade serious and stern despite his gracious affability. But nothing was said, save that the Lord General, taking occasion when none should see nor hear asked if I had anticipated the Prince's coming; and on my assurance that neither Nell nor I had ever dreamed of it he seemed satisfied; and one who knew nothing of what had happened, and how strangely this stray falcon from a royal nest had come swooping into the home and power of the enemies of his House and had fairly perched himself on the wrist of the man who had wrought the downfall of that House, such an one, I say, would



not have conceived that anything extraordinary had occurred.

When the hour of parting for the night had come I walked with the Lord General to his apartments in the East Wing where he was established in state, as Rupert had been, years ago. At the door he said—

“The Prince must never leave the Commonwealth alive, Sir John.”

“Nay then,” I replied; “if he goeth not hence of the Commonwealth unharmed John Baldwin remaineth here dead.”

“What mean you?”

“He is my guest—albeit unbidden still my guest and loved and cherished for many kindnesses and for the sweetness of his heart. He came, rashly I admit, but still to do me pleasure and honor. He must go as safely as he came, and he shall. I shall answer for it that his visit hath in it no harm in act or purpose to the Commonwealth.”

“Nay, but Sir John, I adjure thee, by that duty to thy country and the great Cause to which thou hast been ever faithful and true (with a loyalty that hath discovered no fault nor weakness) that thou consider well this matter. Remember, the Prince Rupert hath not only been one of the most active and successful leaders of the armies which have so impiously fought against the true religion and the rights of all free Englishmen but he is able and shrewd in council as well, and of a popularity that doth draw men after him; and if he be so minded he may, being here, put the Commonwealth and all that hath been bought with the blood of God’s Saints in great and imminent peril.”

“But he is not so minded, my dear General, and I beg you shall so receive my assurance; it was a mad-cap rash thing that he should venture into the lion’s jaws; but he was ever thus delighting in daring and adventurous escapades and to do this must have been an irresistible temptation; but he came, I say, to do me honor for he doth love me and hath a great admiration for the Lady Eleanor with whom he was first made acquainted in this



house, when he was her father's guest, and whom he hath met in France. That he hath no other purpose in landing on these shores I dare swear in godly honesty; and will answer for it with my life if need be. I pray thee, my General, be persuaded by me that no harm shall come of his visit here. He will return quietly to his ship and so a safe and happy end shall come to it all."

"Sir John, there may come a time to any, when the most dear thing he holds must be offered up in the cause of God and country, when the supremest sacrifice must be made; and woe to him who shrinks or turns back at such a time."

"May God in His infinite mercy grant that such a time may never come either to thee or to me. And yet if it should, I am persuaded that neither Oliver Cromwell nor John Baldwin shall be found wanting in that hour of the supremest test—nay, not if it should take all that is dearer than life itself."

"Amen."

"But that time hath not come as yet; neither the cause of our country nor the will of our God doth require at my hands the life of my friend the Prince Rupert who hath put himself in my power with a perfect trust."

"May God bless thee, dear lad!" said the Lord General abruptly, as he clasped my hand and turned thoughtfully into his chamber.

But I have not served with General Cromwell so long not to know the twists of his mind and his ways with things.

Going first to the great oak in the park as I had appointed I met there Ned Taber, my faithful sergeant in the old regiment and the father of my dear Dorothy, and from him learned that, as I had directed, word had been sent to all of the old troopers within reach to appear fully armed equipped and mounted at rendezvous a mile or so distant and on the road the Prince must take to escape, at eleven of the clock that night, to await there my orders. Many of them were on the Baldwin, Hedges and Templeton estates and were devoted to me, as I well knew.



"I count upon at least twenty," said Ned, "who will be there without fail."

"That number may serve, albeit I should have liked twice as many, for my Lord General doth ride with fifty of the best from the old army. But the justice of our cause must make up for our lack."

"He rideth with no better men than shall be at your back this night, and if he prevail he shall do so after showing that he is worthy. My reports from the Hay Cock show his men alert and well in hand."

"Aye, I'll warrant. When thou dost catch the weasel napping thou mayst look to find Oliver Cromwell nodding. But go thou to the rendezvous, inspect the men and have all in readiness. Didst bring my old hunting-whistle, as I bade thee?"

"Here it is."

"Then go—it is now past ten; thou wilt recognize the signals when I sound them?"

"Quicker than the voice of my wife Ruth when I oversleep in the morning—or forget to wipe my shoes before entering her kitchen."

"Go, then," and away he rode, going on the turf till out of hearing.

Entering the Hall I found Charley, my brother Will and Tom Templeton to whom I did unfold my purpose and plans.

"We ride with you," cried Tom promptly.

"We trusted all to you, John," said Charley; "knowing no one would be quicker to see what threatened nor how to meet it. We are ready."

"I know not where thou hast any brains in that huge body of thine, thou great Behemoth," added Will, "but thou hast them, that I must concede."

"Pigmies may carry them in their bodies and thine I think are truly in thy belly, sweet William, if I may judge by the manner of their usual working. Mine are in my head where God meant all his better handiwork should wear them."

"Thou art monstrous rude to thy elder brother, my Tom-



tit," rejoined Will; and then we returned to the withdrawing room, guided by the sound of Rupert's ringing voice as he sang a dashing love song. Here we found with him all the ladies and some of the men, not yet retired, and all charmed with the handsome dare-devil. Truly he fears nothing on earth—but in Heaven some, I hope—and he looked it, the very incarnation of a happy, care-free Cavalier.

"Fie!" he shouted when he saw me; "a bridegroom, and on his wedding-night and away from the side of his bride for a full ten minutes, I'll dare swear!"

"It hath not happened to me to be married so frequently that I have become well drilled in the observance of the behavior proper to a bridegroom," I returned; "but I hope to be better versed in it after I shall have been married a few times more."

"An' thou marryest any more, John," said Nell, "thou'lt e'en have to find another bride; for after thy scandalous desertion of me I protest I'll ne'er wed thee again—not if thou livest to be as old as Methusaleh."

And at this speech I kissed her with a rousing smack before them all; to punish her for her pertness.

"I' faith," quoth Rupert springing to his feet, "if that part of the ceremony is to be gone over again I'm quite prepared to do my share as before."

"Nay," blushed Nell; "'tis but the ignorance of this blundering husband of mine who hath been ill-trained for aught save fighting"—

"And there he needs no instructing, as I can well testify from personal observation," laughed Rupert.

"And it shall be my business to supply what is lacking in his house manners, if aught can be done with such a great bear," and the Lady Nell looked so charmingly saucy I wonder that I kissed her not again.\*

\*He did try to kiss me again and desisted only when I broke my fine new fan over his great knuckles. For he had suddenly grown mighty bold and forward.



There was perhaps that in my eye which Rupert understood, for without abandonment of his gay humor he went about saying farewell to those present.

"I must back to my ship with all speed, my dear friends; it is duty alone that tears me away from your gracious company. I learned by merest accident in France a fortnight since that this marriage was to take place here to-day and I swore that nothing should keep me from it. And nothing hath kept me. Nor shall any penalty I may have to pay for my coming have power to make me regret that I have been here."

A word to Nell was enough; and we, the Prince, Will, Charley, Tom and your grandfather, slipped out of a side door, found our horses and the Prince's two gentlemen awaiting us in the shadow of the great stables and were soon off.

The late moon was slowly mounting in a sky in which clouds floated fantastically. The air was dry and sharp and the road hard and good. We took across the fields at times to avoid any possible encounter albeit I was sure we need expect nothing for an hour or so. Reaching the designated spot we drew up in the shadow of a wood and, sounding my whistle, Ned was soon with me. His report was better than I had expected; he had thirty-two men with him which, with our party, made thirty-seven, all as well able as any in England to give account of themselves.

"I' faith," cried Rupert, "there never was a finer night for such a business and I protest I should keenly relish a bout with your bully brewer; he hath a rare hard head but I think I could crack it."

"That thou shalt never do," I replied, "while I am by; he is my friend."

"Gad! What a pucker thou art in with thy friends, Big John! They are a scurvy lot that thou hast so much trouble to keep them from flying at each others' throats with naked blades."

Aye, but he must have been a man to fight by the side



of, this Rupert. During all the ride (and all the time he knew that his life was in extremest peril) he was as light-some and merry as if at table, in safety with his best-loved boon companions. The more I knew I ought to hate him for a most dangerous enemy to all I held dear the more I loved him.

I sent one man upon an eminence back of the road where he could see its length for a mile or more, with orders to signal when he saw or heard the General's troopers coming. Two more I placed in the wood on either side the road with instructions to maintain a low and cautious whistling of signals so soon as the Lord General's troop should come nearly abreast of them; and to keep moving about in the shadow as they did so. The rest of my men I held in the darkness of the wood.

At last the signal came; and at almost the same instant the distant sound of their galloping was borne to our ears on the slow wind from them to us; at the which I formed my men across the road just where a turn would keep them hidden from our pursuers until they were within two hundred yards of us. Leaving with them the Prince, Will, Charley and Tom, I rode a hundred yards to the front and taking the middle of the road, waited.

On they came with the steady rhythmic beat of hoofs so familiar and so dear to me; the which, I am persuaded, no other troops were ever so well drilled as to keep in such regular rise and fall; the clash of sword-hilts striking the heavy cuisses on their thighs, the rattle of their harquebusses, and the jingle of their spurs and loose equipments sounding louder and louder as they came nearer; while as the moon emerged by times from behind a woolly, drifting cloud, the light fell full on their steel breast-pieces which shone and flashed like silver mirrors. But this could I see only by glimpses, now and again, for they came on a line almost at right angles with that on which we awaited them.

Reaching the turn just as the moon shone out full and glorious they were brought to a sudden halt at sight of



my solid line of men, equipped like unto themselves, stretching motionless across the road (from a deep drainage ditch on the one side, to a treacherous morass in which the water sparkled viciously, on the other) firm-seated and formidable and with that air of resolute preparedness the men of the General's own training do ever show. For a moment they clustered in consultation; and well they might, for over my men hung the buff-and-Bible banner which Ned had borne in many a hard fight from Preston to Worcester while at their own front flew its fellow. I silently awaited the challenge, noting meanwhile that the signaling of my two men on either side now here now there, drew much uneasy attention from our pursuers.

"What troops are these and what means their presence in this peaceful country in war-like array, this night?"

It was the Lord General himself in command. The sly fox had thought to take me unawares because it was my wedding night.

"Nay, what troops are those at thy back and what do they here, where all is peace?"

"'Tis the Lord General of the Commonwealth of England and his Guards! Who art thou and why art thou here?"

"We are good and true men from the Ironsides contingent of the Commonwealth's army; and we are here to protect the honor of an honest gentleman who as a host is bound to set his guest safely on his way; and, as well, to guard the Lord General of the Commonwealth from all danger of the doing of a deed which, if done, would stain his good name most foully."

"And who hath charged thee with the shielding of the Lord General's good name"—but by this I heard excited voices in their ranks exclaiming, "Sir John! Sir John! It is Sir John!"

"Aye, it is I, John Baldwin," I said, "thy old and faithful servant, my Lord General, who is ashamed to-night, since for the first time in his life he hath met thee on an unworthy errand; and who, to save thy honor



no less than his own is minded to defeat thy present purpose; aye, and will do it, too, look you, my General."

"Thou great obstinate opinionated fool! 'Tis thy wedding night and thou hast long been due in thy bridal-bed."

"The wedding-bed of John Baldwin shall never be defiled by the carcass, living or dead, of a man who hath basely betrayed his friend to his death or any other harm nor turned his back to take his ease while his honor and that of his loved General too, were imperiled."

For a moment there came from the Lord General, who had ridden out a few paces in front of his men, uncouth, spluttering sounds, from which I could gain no articulated meaning. He sat thus, irresolute, while you might count fifty and then asked in a quieter tone—

"What flag is that you carry?"

"The buff-and-Bible flag, sir, which hath gone by thy side in many a hard-fought field and never waved in presence of an act to dishonor either Cromwell nor his Ironsides; nor shall it to-night."

"What number of men have you?" and he peered into the depths where my fellows were piping their pregnant signals right merrily.

"Why, then, my Lord General, I have all that I need to handle those who back you, unless, indeed, thou hast conjured a brigade into these parts since noon to-day; and if thou hast, we shall make shift to give e'en such a company entertainment and exercise."

The man was sore puzzled. He knew I was right and that he was wrong. But that would not have stayed him; for he had argued himself into a false conviction of duty. What did stay him was the thought that there was a conflict in which the issue bade fair to go against him.

"Dear lad, I am keeping thee from thy sweet bride."

"That thou art, my General."

"Go home! Thou hast beaten me again. Was there ever such a—he shall go, I say. The Prince Rupert shall go, unharmed. Only do thou go home."



“ ‘After thee is manners,’ as we say in the Fens, General. Do thou precede me and I shall follow with all my men. But first write me a safe-conduct for the Prince and his two gentlemen.”

“I’ll see thee hanged, first!”

“Thou art determined then that I shall not see my wedding bed this night? For, truly, thou dost know that to deliver the Prince safely on board his ship requires either thy safe-conduct or John Baldwin’s presence by his side—poor Baldwin! he that is a bridegroom, wedded but twelve hours ago! Wilt send him on this long errand at such a time to spare thyself the trouble to sign thy name? What shall the Lady Eleanor have to say to thee? Fie!”

I have not often seen the Lord General give way to mirth; but on my soul he roared and roared again and reeled about in his saddle like one drunken.

“Bring me here the materials,” he cried, still chuckling; and when they were brought, he scrawled the safe-conduct by the light of a lanthorn and sealed it with his great ring in wax melted at the flame.

As this was about concluded a horse came flying out of my troop and here was Rupert, dashing gallantly towards us in the moonlight, his plumes and his long curls flying. As he came near he checked his steed with most graceful horsemanship, swung his hat from his head with one hand and stretched the other towards Cromwell—

“My Lord General,” he cried, and his voice rang like a bugle call in the frosty air; “thou art a man! And as the fates have denied me the privilege of meeting thee face to face on the field of battle do thou me the honor to take my hand here on the field of knightly chivalry.”

“Thou art a brave and gallant Prince; and if thou hadst not Stuart blood in thy veins”——

“But I have that same blood pulsing with every beat of my heart, General Cromwell; and I am ever true to it in thought word and deed. Farewell. I shall think more of thee, and of myself, too, for this meeting.”

The Lord General rode back with his troop to Hedge



Hall, where we followed soon after; having first set the Prince a short distance on his way in a brisk gallop which sent the blood singing through my veins, Rupert the while pealing a rousing battle song to the time of our horses' hoofs and the jingle of our accoutrements.

While we were breakfasting the next morning, the Lord General, who had spoken no word of the affair of the night before, said to Nell—

“Lady Eleanor, thou didst yesterday take the most important step of thy life and lightly assumed most prodigious responsibilities. It is a duty in which I shall not fail, to have thee ever in my earnest prayers, that grace may be granted unto thee for all thy needs; and especially that thou shalt be given the wisdom and the means to govern that mad husband of thine—something that hath never yet been vouchsafed to any other being on earth. 'Tis a heavy thing to look forward to, but put thy trust in the Lord and it may be thou shalt succeed!”

“Trouble not thy heart, my dear General,” answered Nell, with the most astounding calmness and assurance; “I shall manage his Worship with all ease.”

“Why, then, Nell,” I stammered, for I felt hard hit, “indeed it shall be an easy thing for thee. Thou shalt find me always obedient if thou wilt only make me”——

“See all things with his own eyes, do all things as he thinks best, and have all things as he chooses,” quoth the General.

“Nay,” said Nell sweetly; “that would not be good for his wholesome, my Lord General.”



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### HE SAILETH FOR VIRGINIA

THE MERE, 10th June, 1652.

HAVING had a feeling for the past two or three years that there might be, somewhere else, a better field than England doth afford for those faculties and endowments which have come to me from God, I counseled long and soberly with my dear as to where and how we might dispose of our future. Betty, too, was often of the council; and Nell's good brother Charley and my brother Will sometimes, but not so often.

Nell bringeth to me £10,000, which is as much as I had from my mother, and what we have would well answer for our needs here in the old land of our birth; but may answer better elsewhere.

And ever our thoughts turned to that new land across the seas the which hath been described by Sir Walter Raleigh, and where so many of God's faithful people have already gone to find liberty of conscience in His worship and to build up a state where others may find freedom to serve Him according to that religion which these godly forerunners shall there establish. It is a goodly land and a rich, in its soil and waters and climate, as we do gather from the reports of those who, like Sir Walter, have returned to tell us of it. That it is chiefly inhabited by savages is but an encouragement to a true believer to seek it; since in the bringing of these heathen to the light of His truth there is work which hath special charm and claim in the estimation of a faithful Christian. For what more useful life may a man live than to thus labor for the deliverance of those who have never heard of our God, for the deliverance of them from the bonds of sin



which do bind them and shall to all Eternity if some do not come to their relief?

Moreover, this land of England is becoming too throng with the people who live and breed here. I crave more room and freedom in every way for myself and mine. The House of Baldwin is ancient and of approved history; but my brother William is now its head, and albeit I have won a footing of my own yet have I no desire to set up a rival to it here. In another land I may find that verge and scope for which I yearn not only for myself but for those who shall come after me, too—for you, my dear grandchildren whose future is ever with my thoughts and pressing on my heart.

To say the last word: I am weary to deadly loathing of this constant shedding of good English blood, which hath so saturated the soil of this Island that was meant to be a place of joyous living, that it doth smell to Heaven. I want no more of it. And with my poor powers of foresight I am able to see no end to it for many years. This English government in its very nature doth require a monarch (and we have killed our King, pray God righteously!) and we have none to come, for of the late royal House none appeareth any more worthy than was he, the one who is gone, if even so worthy.

Nor doth there now appear among foreign Princes any of whom the English people may make a wise choice. Rupert, to my mind approacheth nearer than any (and I believe my Lord Fairfax is of much the same inclination) but he hath the fatal taint of the Stuart blood—and a Stuart is ever born with the error ingrained in his very nature that he shall govern and the people shall submit to be governed by him and ask for no more.

The Lord General is to-day as much King as any who, crowned by solemn rite and acclaimed and accepted by all, ever sat upon our throne. And things do move well and go ill; well that peaceful toil and trade meet with due reward and the peace is soothly kept; ill that all do feel that here is no substantial footing, that a makeshift serves



us now, passing well, but that it is, all said and done, even so but a makeshift, which shall and should give way to something better.

But before that shall be accomplished and in the very doing of it I fear me there will still be much more wrangling and of men who should be in all brotherly love, flying at each other's throats, and more good blood spilled and more good lives lost. And as to all this I have no desire to be in or of it. I have no delight in war and fighting save as a means to a good end. I have no patience to bide the slow process of adjustment through the angry operations of civil strife.

My dear doth take my view; only she doth much better and more clearly see and put it. Much as she loves England she feels that it hath become a shambles and a breeding place for conspiracies and errors, which give to ever busy Satan all too much of opportunity. She hath no desire that I shall live as I so far have lived with my sword ever bared to seek the life of my brother who hath no eyes to see as mine do. Then, too, she doth unite with me in the belief that there is no just cause why we should remain the younger branch of a great House here be it never so illustrious, when, as God hath clearly indicated, we may, with opportunity, rear one as good or even better. Albeit she doth not express it quite so strongly nor dwell upon it as I do; she being a woman.

The consideration of all these things occupied us most earnestly for several months, and with the conclusion that we should do well to go to America. Accordingly I made a journey to London in April last and counseled with the Lord General Cromwell. Occupied as he was with the prodigious cares of State he received me most kindly, and would have me lodge nowhere but at Hampton Court; and chided me that I left the Lady Eleanor behind in the Fens. On opportunity I opened up my mind to him.

"America!" he cried in his first surprise. "You leave England for the wild new land across the seas? That were



a change indeed. And I know well it hath much to recommend it, too. Was I not myself once on the eve of going thither? Indeed, had the Grand Remonstrance failed of adoption by the Parliament I should have gone thither more than twenty years ago. But how can England do without Big John Baldwin?" he added; and then, his face suddenly breaking into a most mischievous smile he went on—"and yet, may I not say the hand of Providence is to be seen in this, too? For of a verity, if thou shouldst remain here with thy masterful ways, what would become of poor Oliver Cromwell, whom thou hast defeated as no other mortal man ever hath and so often that I may e'en look to be brought entirely into subjugation by thee and thou and opportunity hold neighbors much longer? Aye! 'tis the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes; for thus hath He prepared a way of escape for us. But, when thou art gone who shall remain to set Oliver Cromwell right, as thou hast ever been used to do?"

"Nay, my Lord General, if it be the Lord's doing that I am led to another land and so shall be no longer near to befriend thee in thy hour of need, why then thou wilt have no other help but must needs look to God himself and Him alone, for assistance and guidance; aye, truly, there must thou go for nowhere else canst thou turn."

Among my Lord General's drawbacks and defects, one of no small importance and the which I do most heartily detest, is his strange lack of judgment in things and his most erratic sense of humor, which doth often lead him sadly astray as it did in this very case, for he seemed vastly pleased at what I had said in all honest earnestness and sincerity. What he saw to laugh at I could and can not conceive; but when he saw me taking umbrage he became grave again and soberly decorous.

"Thou art right, Sir John. But now, as thou wilt go, what may I do to speed and prosper thee?"

"Truly, General, if my poor services to England do merit reward why might I not ask a grant of lands in the Colony of Virginia?"



“ ’Twould be but small reward for all that thou hast done.”

“ ’Twill suffice, my Lord General.”

And ere I left London I held the patent of the Commonwealth for ten miles square of land to be chosen and selected by myself anywhere within the limits of that Colony, with the proviso that I might take none that had been granted to another.

My first errand was then to Bristol; where, failing to employ for hire a vessel to suit my purpose I was at last fain to buy one. It was of good capacity and with approved reputation for seaworthiness, and was then called the *John Hampden*; but the which name, despite my regard for him who gave his life for the cause of English liberty I did change, re-christening my ship, *The Lady Eleanor*. I found a Master for her in one duly certified to be not only a competent seaman but also a godly man of the true religion, by name Job Herring; and left to him the business of engaging a crew of competent sailors and of laying in such ship's stores as shall serve for the voyage; giving commission at the same time to reputable dealers to collect and store on board supplies sufficient for fifty people for twelve months' subsistence.

For before I went to London and so soon as it became known in the Fens that I meant to go to America I was forthwith overwhelmed with applications from all sorts and conditions of people to go with me; and of them all I chose ten of the old Ironsides men, they being good farmers and of proper health and strength; who, with their families do number forty souls. Then, while in London, meeting a young physician, Absalom Chenowith, a brother to him whom I had met there at my first visit and he desiring to go I gave him leave; for indeed he may be most useful and I have bidden him collect good store of physic, such as we may need in the new land.

The ship is being fitted also to take six horses, videlicet, a stallion, two geldings and three brood mares, as well as a bull, and four cows in milk; three yoke of strong



oxen, twenty sheep and as many swine, with the necessary provender for the same. Since my return to the Mere the Lady Eleanor hath added the requirement that a goodly number of fowls, pigeons and pea-fowl, a cock and a hen, shall also go with us. We are to sail on the 15th July.

I have organized my men as soldiers, with Ned Taber as Captain; for he and his family, that is to say, Ruth his wife, my dear Dorothy his daughter, and my namesake John, his son, a strapping lad of sixteen years, purpose to go with us. Dorothy hath been the Lady Eleanor's maid, in name, since our marriage; in truth she hath been her companion and friend; for the Fens never grew a sweeter lass, nor a better; far above her station in all lady-like accomplishments is she and of a wisdom womanly and beyond her years.

The evening of my return home early in May was spent in giving to the family the details of all that I had done and purposed; and the whole night nearly was given up to the discussion thereof; in the which however I noted with surprise, my sister Betty took but little part but sat thoughtful and sober, hearkening to all things. The next day, a little before the dinner-hour, Will came to me from the upper part of the house—

“There is no one on earth but you, John, who can do aught with Betty and I pray you go to her now; for she hath lost her wits and is as mad as a March hare.”

“Why, what now, Will; what do you mean?”

“Go see,” he answered, swinging himself out of the house.

Going to Betty's room I found it in wildest confusion. Boxes and chests strewed the place, drawers were open and littering the floor were piled heaps of linen sheets and cloths, bed-clothing and woman's gear, till a man with a reasonably-proportioned foot such as God in His wisdom and love hath given me might find neither place to put it down nor no rest for the sole of it. And in the midst of it all was Betty, her look absorbed and busy, her lips compressed and her cheeks bright with color; while her



beautiful brown hair, which is wont to be smooth and glossy was unkempt and untidy and tangled as I never before saw it.

"Why Betty, what now; what means all this?"

"Go out about your own affairs, John; I am too busy with mine to talk to you."

"But what are you doing?"

"Doing, you great Stupid? What should I be doing but getting ready to go to America?" and so saying she dived deep into a great chest and dragged out a huge bale of home-spun linen as white as snow and smelling most sweetly of lavender.

"To America!"

"Aye, John, to America. Hast never heard of the country before?"

"But Betty, dost thou mean to leave the old nest here at the Mere and go with me across the sea to the wilderness and the savages?"

"Yes, John, I mean to leave the old nest here at the Mere" (and there was a catch in her voice and in good truth a great lump in my own throat) "and go with you across the sea to the wilderness and the savages. Now leave me, for I am busy."

"But Betty, you said naught of this before."

"Nay," she replied absently, still busy with the litter on the floor; "nay, it is not my habit to go chattering about like some I know, to give notice of my mind once I make it up."

"But Betty, you have not asked me if I will take you."

"Nor neither will I ask you. I have no time to waste in asking people what I may do—'tis not my way."

"But if I forbid you?"

"Pooh!"

"And refuse you place on my ship?"

"Pooh! Refuse if you wish—if you find it will amuse you. I'll not ask to be taken nor be stayed by a refusal. I'll just e'en go."

"But our brother Will, what will he do?"



“Marry some woman fool enough to have him as all you men do save those who remain single. Now go.”

“Who will he marry?”

“Anybody—he should have little trouble about that—all women are fools.”

And when I tried to reason with her she seized me with her great, strong, beautiful arms, hugged me closely to her for a moment, sobbed as if her heart were broken, then kissed me with a kiss warm and moist with tears and sadly mixed up with a tousled lock of her hair which just then slipped down over her nose, and then pushed me out of the door bidding me begone but never to argue with her again on this matter, a thing she said I ought to know better than to try to do—and she was right.

THE MERE, 6th July, 1652.

The grave of my father and my mother I visited and kneeling till at last I fell prone there I poured out all my heart to God; and sore lamented that I might not to them, too; and felt with a pang that something were amiss since they, in Paradise, might not hear my voice nor feel what was in my heart nor send the smallest word or token nor make the faintest sign while I lay there, again a child and all my boasted manhood stripped off and despised at my feet, while I longed and yearned for them once more, if even for the shortest moment of time. . . .

All hath been done; and the severing of the old ties that bind me to this dear place gives me an agony of a piercing poignancy. Shall any thing I may gain in the new land make compensation for this I now endure? God knows.

I have no heart to say more of all this leave-taking.

The last entry to be made in England in this my journal hath now been made.

But I take a great bundle of quills with me; for God knows if there be, or ever shall be, any geese in America.



## CHAPTER XXXV

HE REACHETH THE HAVEN WHERE HE WOULD BE

ON BOARD THE LADY ELEANOR, VIRGINIA, 10th December, 1652.

UNDER a strange sky and surrounded on all sides by strange things, in the heart of a new world of which we know but little, resting in the love of the God Who hath hereto so wonderfully led and brought us through perils of the great deep, through perils of the wilderness and an unknown land, through perils of sickness, and through a thousand perils of every sort which doubtless lurked on every hand albeit we saw them not, it is befitting that, before going forward with this, the first entry in this my journal to be made in the New World, I should record my humble and grateful thankfulness to Him Who of His great mercy hath guided us safely hither. Of that thankfulness (which I feel in my most inmost heart and soul), I may give but small expression here; for in rendering it up I do discover that the greater part taketh no form of words but is a feeling which springeth and wellet up within me, and so high is it that it maketh mock of my efforts to clothe it in speech. But He Who searcheth the heart and tryeth the reins, doth not fail, I do believe, to see and know what it is. Praised be His Holy Name, forever and ever.

It were to essay a wearisome and endless and it may be an unavailing and unprofitable task to try to set forth here the details of our sailing over the seas to this land. Our hearts are yet torn and bleeding from the wrench of parting with our old home and friends nor can I persuade myself to enter into it.

As for the five and sixty days spent upon the water from the time we put out from Bristol till the day when we set foot on the solid land at Jamestown, what may be said,



save that we sailed, and sailed, and sailed, and waited, with such patience as might be for the end of it?

One day was like unto the other in most things having variety only in the winds which did change and shift from time to time, the clouds which came and went, the sun which rose and set, the moon that fullled and waned. All about was but the wide, wide waters interminable and unchanging, till one was fain to think there was no end to them; or else that having got into their midst we had been anchored and there should stay forever. But through it all the good Master Herring kept his even way, unchanging and serene, with an air which was ever an assurance that all was going well and that there would come an end at last and in due time to the awful isolation of the sea.

And truly, never before in my life did I have so borne in upon me mine own insignificance as during those long days when we hung between Heaven and earth upon that great, boundless, restless ocean; nor was I ever so brought to reflect upon the wondrous mysteries and unfathomable purposes and loving kindness of our God, as when, so seeing my own littleness as compared with the majesty of His mighty works the truth came to me that weak, puny and worthless as I am, yet this did He create for me, as He hath created even greater things; and hath even sent His Son to suffer shameful death that I might not, through mine own worthlessness, lose title to either these or them. And I am left in a great maze to know why I am at all; but also why I am worth so much loving care, and this redemption at so great a price.

And in the only answer, which is that He knoweth, whether I do or not (and since He hath not given me to know also, it is none of my affair but His alone), and that, He being what He is, it can be for only the wisest and most righteous purpose and to serve a noble end, I find not only peace and tranquility to my soul but courage to think that I cannot after all, be so insignificant, but rather of some value and consequence.



The which reflection I do embrace as comforting and uplifting.

The first sight of land was, to me, as a new birth; for it was as if it were a coming from nowhere to somewhere. It was as if, having been in a state of suspension in which I was held vaguely in an atmosphere which imparted to me no thrill of consciousness but kept me ever inert and without feeling of where, or why, or whether I had such a thing as existence, I was suddenly let into the light of life, and found I had a beating heart, breathing lungs, seeing eyes and hearing ears, and moreover had swiftly come to know that they were meant to be used, and that here I could use them.

(And if the head of a grand-son of mine shall ache with puzzling to know what his grand-dad meaneth by all this, he may comfort himself with the truth that his progenitor scarcely knoweth himself; and yet he may learn it all by taking a long voyage like mine just lately ended; which is to say, that on such a voyage he will feel and know things which he may not utter sensibly, strive he ever so valiantly.)

The health of the eighty souls on board the *Lady Eleanor* was fairly good; the twenty seamen were, to be sure, inured to the hardships and the manner of life; our own people (grown to sixty instead of only the fifty I had at first meant to bring, since I added a few good men of skill in carpentry, smithing, turning and the like) adapted themselves marvelously to it albeit there were some longer in recovering from the sickness of the sea than others (and, of a truth, I have on this voyage, gone myself through experiences of it in the which there was but little joyousness); but at the end we had none who was not able to take his full allowance of meat and drink and with relish, too. The *Lady Eleanor* and my sister Betty were the best sailors of all, suffering but little; but ever busying themselves as is the holy and blessed custom of good women everywhere, with ministrations to those who were ill and downcast.

On the day we first sighted land the wife of Abijah



Holcomb was brought to bed with a daughter, the which I named Dove, for with her came the dry land; and I have charged myself with the responsibility of looking after the little maid's future welfare.

At Jamestown we lay two weeks while we were deciding, upon such information as we there gained where we should go to find my ten miles square of land; and in that place will never again, with my consent, one dear to me set foot. For there both Nell and Betty were stricken with the ague and fever, which Absalom Chenowith avers is bred by the pestilential marshes that there abound; and I was in an agony of doubt and fear at one time lest I might lose one or both of them.

We found that the Commonwealth's fleet had done its work well and these cockerel Cavaliers had transferred their allegiance, with all proper promptness and grace; securing however, good terms for themselves the granting of which I conceive to be an honor to England's present government and but just to the Colonists. Nor was I ill-pleased with those of them I met, finding them courteous, kindly and hospitable; with the good old English heartiness upon which was grafted, too, a most charming freedom and ease and self-confidence as of men breathing a wider air and gaining more of spirit with the breath. Till Nell fell sick (which was only five days after we reached the place, and she was followed to bed two days later by Betty), we were every day most bountifully entertained at one house or another, the third day being the guests of Sir William Berkeley, the late royal governor, at his place, Greenspring, a few miles out.

Sir William hath a beautiful place wherein a man might be well content to spend his life. His lands are rich and of easy tillage and he hath a most marvelous orchard of apple, pear, peach, quince and other fruit bearing trees, to the number, I think he said, of, it may be, two thousand (and truly, there must be near that many for it is a most prodigious great orchard), and in his stables he hath nigh to a hundred horses—and mighty fine ones too, with good



pedigrees from old England. His house is not large, but most commodious and furnished with all that may be found in the seat of any of the gentry at home. Everything is brought from thence, it is true, since there are no conveniences for the making of them here. His library is larger than I shall ever have use for, for myself, but I was glad when I saw it that, for the sake of my dear grandchildren, almost as many books as he hath and looking just as well on their outsides were in the hold of my ship. At table there was spread a banquet fit for a king, with as good food as ever an Englishman sat down to, and wines of the best.

Indeed I was surprised and pleased to find how readily and amply the comforts and luxuries of our English homes had been brought hither; aye, and the self-same polite nurture too that hath been the very breath of our life; for in the discoursing at the board there was wanting none of the elegance and wit that we have at home; those present being all of gentle blood.

When I beheld all this I was truly thankful that Nell and Betty had overborne me when I would have sailed without many things that go to the furnishing of a gentleman's home, I thinking we were coming to endure privations and hardships for a time, which should make it a folly to think of such things. But thanks to them I have, to put under my roof when I do get one to shelter our heads, that which shall equal any gentleman's I have seen here; and that shall soften the pangs of our exile to my dear ones. And when Nell and Betty came lovely and stately, to those awaiting them, I was proud of them; for they had all the fine gowns and fal-lals they used at home and none shone so here as did they; as is always so.

Sir William hath been and is a stiff King's man, and hath shown nothing for the most part but his rough side to those of the remnant of the true faith who have sought homes in Virginia; but he was most civil to me, as, indeed, were they all; and as it behooves them hereafter to be not to me only but to all who belong to me. For the day hath



gone forever when the insolence of royal favorites and of those who follow papistical error will be tolerated by free and Protestant Englishmen.

Sir William is, himself, of most polite and civil behavior, or hath been so far as I have seen him, to all; and is a most engaging gentleman. Only once did he show any of the bitterness which I misdoubt must rankle in his heart. The ladies being gone and we men at our wine at table the change in the government was lightly touched upon in a way to give no offense, for out of that thoughtful consideration which is ever the gentleman's distinguishing mark all seemed to avoid anything which should provoke feeling. Sir William sat deep in thought and silent for the most part, but once, at last, looking up with a sharp gleam in his eye, he said tartly—

“I like not your Oliver Cromwell, Sir John; I say I like him not.”

Now that he had chosen to forget that I was his guest and (as no one else had), what was due me as such I felt that he should have no complaint against me if I too should overlook the point. And so I answered most civilly and with my eye on his—

“Why, then, that is a most lamentable hearing, Sir William, and one which I trust thou wilt not let come to the poor man's ears lest he be troubled and grieved as to what shall become of him without thy approval. Thou shouldst consider his feelings, Sir William; and thou wilt allow me to say further that as one who is proud to be Oliver Cromwell's friend, I, too, have a feeling in the matter and would not have him lightly spoken of in my presence; the which I beg thou wilt oblige me by keeping ever in mind.”

Sir William grew red for a moment; then, his brow clearing he laughed most heartily the others joining with much apparent enjoyment; and there an end to it. I should have regretted mightily anything more than this; for gentlemen should not be ever brawling like bullies; and thereafter I was on my guard; but nothing else was said or done by



any to which the most extremest sensitiveness could find exception.

When I sought advice as to whereabouts I should choose my land I was warmly pressed by all, in the most cordial manner, to take up my manor holding in that vicinity; and I have reason to believe that they would in their fashion have been good neighbors to me barring our differences of opinion on politics and religion which I am sure could never be harmonized. But while there is no better land in the world it may be, than that about Jamestown, and I like for neighbors those having good manners and polite ways, yet did I feel that for the very reason that we are so widely apart in our views on these two matters there could never be between us anything more cordial than a civil behavior towards each other; the which might not always, under sudden stress, serve to keep the peace. To add to which, I fain would believe and trust most implicitly those by whom I am nearly surrounded; and this could I not do with the Cavaliers; for I know the breed and there are few of them worthy of the unreserved confidence of one differing from them in religion and politics as do I.

Then their mode and manner of life is not what I should like; it being, to my mind, godless and frivolous. They live for the pleasures of this life only and its vain diversions chiefly; and while I, myself, have appreciation I humbly trust, of the blessings which God hath given us unworthy as we are, yet I do conceive that there are besides them things of the greatest moment which should occupy our minds for some part of the time. Surely it is a low view to take of life, to think that He hath given it to us to be lived as even the poor innocent but soulless butterfly doth live it; what shall we say then to the spending of it in pleasures which, many of them, are not innocent but do corrode the heart, and if maintained and persisted in, destroy the soul?

Among those I met at Jamestown and regarded most highly was one Captain John Goode; a man of middle age



and large substance who hath, however, spent the greater part of his life upon the outer edge of the frontiers; and from love of the doing of it hath explored more of that part of Virginia than any other man I do believe, of them all. Of him I sought advice and from him learned much. There seemeth to be no limit to the good land to be found in Virginia, and he spoke most glowingly of the parts bordering upon the river Potomac; and was especially warm in the praise of a region lying beyond the tidewater, in the Piedmont country, at the foot of the range of blue mountains to the west; only this, he said, was beyond my consideration and not available since it was out of reach of the navigable part of any of the noble streams of this land and I should have no way of shipping my tobacco. But for the beauty of its scenery, the dryness, purity and healthfulness of its air, the grandeur of its forests, the abundance of its springs and brooks and rushing rivers of pure cold water, he said he had never, in all his travels, come across its equal.

The illness of your dear grandmother and your Aunt Betty it was that turned the scale, and decided my mind. Day by day they grew more and more wretched, freezing and burning with the distemper that had fastened itself upon them by means of the foul air from the marshes and the vileness of the water they had to drink at that place. Day by day they grew thinner and weaker, the color in their cheeks turning from its soft loveliness of the pink rose to a dull, bluish-yellowish hue, most sickly, and like to leather with a vile mould upon it, while their eyes became dim and glassy in their sunken sockets, and they could neither eat nor drink nor take any pleasure in life. Nor did anything that Dr. Chenowith nor any there who had experience with the disease serve to help them.

Then I turned to Him who hath never failed me; and on my knees I asked God to guide me, leading me whither health should be gained for these, my dear ones, and where I might found a home for the rearing of godly men and women and so help to build up the Kingdom of the Lord



Christ on earth. And ever, when I rose from my knees, did the thought of the land of which Captain Goode had told me come back to my mind. And so strongly was it borne in upon me that at last I gave order to set sail for the Potomac country, taking with me one Eli Hunt who was certified to me by Captain Goode as a man who had traveled the wilderness with him and familiar with the ways of the red Indians who do more or less abound in all the unsettled parts of Virginia. And truly he doth seem born to this wild life only for he will live no other, nor hath he for twenty years, and yet is he only five and thirty now. He hath little patience with the restraints of civilization and will wear no clothes coming from England; being clad in garments made of deer-skins, tanned and fashioned by Indian squaws; and most beautiful and soft is the material.

I also took on board before sailing a goodly store of maize (or corn, as it is called here), sufficient for the planting in the Spring and some as well to eat and feed to our live stock, together with much of the great variety of vegetables which do grow prolifically and of the finest size and flavor in this country, adding to these such bacon and hams, hung beef and venison, as should repair the inroads on our store made by the consumption of supplies on our voyage hither and guarantee an abundance for all for more than a twelvemonth to come, without reckoning upon what the chase or our next season's planting may yield us.

And from advice gathered from Captain Goode and Eli Hunt and others I bought me implements used in this land, of the need of which I was not aware when we sailed from England. I also added to my store of bright colored cloths, beads, and trinkets for the Indians, who are immoderately fond of such things and whose friendship I hope to have and hold for my own good as well as that of their benighted but I verily believe immortal, souls.

Setting sail on the 14th October we were two weeks on our voyage hither, beating slowly down the James, rounding Comfort Point and sailing up the noble Chesapeake; then



entering the Potomac, making our way leisurely, with frequent stoppages to examine localities which seemed promising. But while both Nell and Betty gained steadily in health from the time we entered the Chesapeake Bay (and so continued, thank God), they also appeared each to have become firmly convinced that the marshy shores of the great rivers and smaller streams should be avoided; feeling that the horrible sufferings which they had endured from the contagion of ague that had seized them at Jamestown was chiefly due to these; and it followed, that wherever I found land which was, to me, that which would serve my purpose, they steadfastly refused to consider the same because of the marshes which there was no trouble to find within such distance as might make them threatening.

Nor could I say aught against this, for I would live on a desert rock to keep them in health if necessary. Master Chenowith was at times of a contrary mind, and once or twice almost peevish, at what he did not quite dare to call the obstinacy of the women-folk (whatever he may have thought), but, he being a doctor of physic and not unwilling as I conceive, to have a field wherein to display his skill in the practice of his art, I gave but little heed to what he had to say.

Day by day I leaned more and more on the counsel of Eli Hunt, who is a man of shrewd mind educated by experience; and he ever urged that I leave the river and make my way to the Piedmont country so glowingly described by Captain Goode; with the which advice to say truth jumped my own inclination. He said we might sail to within sixty miles or so of the gateway to the great valley, and coming then to a great falls over which we could not pass, our supplies and stores might be carried around and transported by smaller boats above the falls to within perhaps twenty miles of the best of the upper end of the valley, and could be taken thence on the backs of our beasts. This was not in the beginning, a thing which looked reasonable, but he was ever so confident and made such light of obstacles (as seemeth to be the way with all who remain



in this land for any time), and as he gave me to know that in that more elevated region such things as ague and fever are unknown among the Indians and cannot exist because there is nothing there to breed them, I, myself (possibly in part also from the exhilarating effects of the Virginia air, which truly hath a most sweet headiness), became each day an easier antagonist for him to vanquish.

To add to all this I had been greatly prepossessed with what Captain Goode had told me of the country; and a vision had sprung up in my mind (placed there by God, I hope and trust), of a life for me and mine away from the corrupting influences of the more thickly settled parts where we should be able to live pure and clean lives, ever serving God, and preparing such conditions as might offer to others who may follow us opportunities of the perfectest sort for the development of the noblest manhood. And as time went on the plan grew within me and took the completest possession of me; till at last I gave myself up to it utterly, and chafed at every delay to our progress. I am now more convinced than ever that in so yielding I did that which was right.

At all events the die has been cast, and I must not permit myself to doubt or fear that the God who hath ever led me hath, of a sudden, left me to my own devices and my own weakness. I am His servant. My purposes are for the advancement of His glory and the benefit of my fellow-men. I shall go forward without fear.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### HE VIEWETH THE PROMISED LAND

11th December—ON BOARD THE LADY ELEANOR.

WE are anchored a mile or so below the great falls and here must leave our good ship that hath served us so stoutly. Long may she live to give further good service. She hath grown very dear to me.

Reaching this point it became necessary that some should go forth to spy out the land even as Joshua and Caleb and their faint-hearted companions reconnoitered the land of Canaan. Reckoning our numbers and advising with Eli Hunt, I found that of our sixty (not counting the little Dove), there are five and thirty males above the age of fourteen and capable of bearing arms. Our lads are the sons of Ironsides men and by inheritance have godliness, courage, strength and self-reliance. In the ship's crew are twenty men.

Leaving the children and women-folk in the ship to be protected by thirty of my men and her four pieces of cannon, all under command of Captain Taber, I could take five of my men with Eli Hunt and myself seven in all, and eight of the ship's crew to handle the two boats, and feel that all might be safe. And this I did; with careful injunctions as to watchfulness, sentinels to be properly posted by both day and night on shore to guard against all danger of surprise from Indians, being assured, however, by Eli Hunt, that such a thing especially at this time of the year would be most unlikely.

The two boats were carried on our shoulders around the falls a distance of about three miles or more and then put again into the water and we embarked and rowed steadily for several hours and until nigh nightfall, when we chose a convenient place to land, set our watch, cooked and ate



our supper and smoked our pipes in great content; the weather being perfect and the sharp frost making the warmth of our camp-fire most agreeable. A brief prayer-meeting having been held I made the rounds of my sentinels, and so to bed, to sleep most soundly till dawn.

The story for the next day hath nothing different; we rowed steadily all hands taking their turns at the oars,

The Potomac is a most noble and beautiful stream wide and placid and of good navigable depth below the falls but not so deep nor so placid above. We sometimes passed through long reaches, it is true, where the current was as lazy and sleepy as that of a mill-pond, but these were interspersed with other stretches where the water ran more swiftly and to make headway against it called for the putting forth of much strength. The stream swarms with fine fish, many of which we caught and ate on our journey; their flesh hath a most exquisite flavor doubtless derived from the marvelous purity and sweetness of the water in which they have their home.

It was not till the morning of the third day that we came to the most strikingly beautiful part of the river which is at the point where the river Shenandoah\* makes in from the South and joins the Potomac. Here lofty hills clad with mighty trees guard the spot where the hitherto-separate streams are wed and go thence the rest of their way as one. Even had I the skill why should I take time to describe that which shall be to all of you most familiar? But I opine its beauty shall never so touch you as it did me.

The southern stream was so swift and tumultuous in its rushing volume that we chose to remain in the Potomac, up which we made our further way for a few miles beyond the meeting place of the two rivers.

When we disembarked we left our sailors with orders (they being well armed and in charge of the boatswain) to keep a sharp lookout by day and by night as well, and

\* The names of streams, etc., which may have been unknown to General Baldwin have been supplied by the Editor, who is guided by his knowledge of the localities.



under no circumstances to leave the spot; but if they should be driven off to take to their boats and, going no further than they were compelled, to await us below.

With Eli Hunt to lead the way and guide us we were sharply put to it to keep him from leaving us behind; for he had no weight of armor such as had we and his long training in the woods made him as tireless as a wolf-hound and almost as swift. We soon found it expedient to relieve ourselves of our breast- and back-pieces which we hid by the side of a great rock, after which we were much more at our ease. Hunt professed to have no fear of enemies lurking to ambush us and went ever forward with all speed (but there was a quickness and a constant watchfulness to his glance that showed us he was taking no vain chances), and we covered fully twenty miles that day, the ground being not difficult the woods open and easy to pass through with no great hill-climbing to do. The morning after we had disembarked, having gone steadily forward for not more than a mile from our camping place, Hunt suddenly halted on the top of a gently rising hill, and said—

“Think you, Sir John, that if you should walk the wide world over you could find a spot more suitable for your purpose? The Shenandoah lies to the east of us with a smaller stream between; the mountain towers a few miles to the west and southwest; look about you for miles, north, south, east and west. What think you of it?”

My breath came quickly as the feeling crowded upon me that here might at last be the end of my searchings, the realization of and answer to my dreams, the fulfilment of my prayers and hopes, the spot chosen of God and predestined and fore-ordained to be the scene of my most important work on earth. The place where I should build a home, and rear a family; aye, mayhap, found a center from which should flow as the Jordan from his Springs, influences for all time to bless and benefit mankind.

And this was that, and the moment, to which I had so long, and those with me, looked forward.

Through all our wanderings, through all the dangers we



had passed, when, on the bosom of the great deep we stood dumb and astonished at the majesty of His works and the power of His might and had no sense of ourselves but to wonder why He was mindful of us (and to almost doubt, it may be, if He were), His purposes for us were working out even as if we alone were the creatures for which He had created all things; even then was He stilling the voice of His storms and guiding the way of His waves and bending the force of His winds to bring us, His most unworthy servants, to this. (See Ps. cvii., 1-9, and Isaiah lxii., 8-12.)

The thought overpowered me and involuntarily, taking no heed of where I was or what I was doing I sank to my knees; and my heart was lifted to Him in a prayer which had no words but held and possessed all my being and which, being done, I have never since been able to remember. But I know that of all my prayers never was there one which was more sincere and heartfelt, and above all, more filled with inexpressible awe and reverence. Truly never was I so shaken and thrilled with righteous fear and joy.

And as I knelt I saw that all knelt save Eli Hunt, who turned his back and stood like one at a funeral; as I have observed he ever does, when we unite in prayer on board ship or elsewhere he stands and turning his face away from all present is silent till the last amen is said.

Rising at last I stood, silent, with bared head, while my eyes roamed over the scene which shall be so familiar to thee; so new and filled with sacred beauty to me; a stretching park of God's ordering on every side, hemmed on the east by the low hills and on the west by the noble mountain, both miles away; and reaching south far beyond the range of the vision; carpeted with rich grass still green and luxuriant where not hidden by fallen leaves, glorious with colors laid on by His hand; grand and stately trees, scattered about for the most part, and only occasionally thickly-set and offering an obstacle to the tilling of the soil; rivulets shining in the sun-light and singing on their way over gravelly beds to the larger stream on the



east; a sky of pale but brilliant blue with only here and there a fleecy cloud; the scurry of rabbits in the leaves and the chatter of squirrels in the trees; a great eagle sweeping majestically to his eerie on the mountain; and glimpses, in the distance below us, of a herd of deer at play.

How shall the rude hand of an uncouth soldier paint the picture? Patience, my children. It shall be limned on heart and mind and soul by the Master's hand in that fair time to come when, in the midst of all this, you shall grow and develop aided by its sweet influence to noble, gracious Christian manhood and womanhood.

Shall I cry folly when I say that standing there a vision rose in my mind of a stately house crowning the heights and surrounded by all that could help to make my dear ones (and in my heart I hold them a legion) happy and godly? Or that as I thus dreamed, the blood leaped in my veins, and my heart beat with an exulting throb and I felt more than a king, and a conqueror? I humbly thank God for it.

We spent the rest of the day in exploring the place. We found everything that a man with wit to help himself might wish for. The soil is rich and deep and loamy, on a gravelly subsoil that must give healthy drainage as must also its rolling conformation. At the foot of the little hill I found a spring gushing from the solid rock, with head enough to turn a mill and feeding a little brook which danced to join its sister issuing from another such source not a furlong away. We found great clustering grape vines festooning the trees; and, again like Joshua and Caleb, we gathered of the fruit, though withered, to carry back to those awaiting our report.

Here was a fat soil to till, sweetest pastures for sheep and kine, with acorns, chestnuts (and persimmons of which Eli Hunt taught me the mystery), for fowl and swine; here were noble trees to fell for the building of homes and the warming of them; here was red clay (as a slip from a hill-side showed), for bricks; here were woods filled with deer and all small game; and the piping of the birds came



from all the thickets with the beating and drumming of their wings as they whizzed hither and yonder in swift flight; here were springs to drink from and rushing streams to turn mill-wheels. With an air like wine breathing into his nostrils and filling his lungs with balm and vigor at every heave and fall of his chest what more could man desire?

From my breast I took a bright blue silken scarf (that Nell had bedecked me withal in her bright and merry gratulation on my wedding night, after I had returned from setting Rupert safely on his way), I took it, I say, from the place over my heart where it had rested ever since that night and fastened it to a noble oak standing on the top of the eminence; and by that sign took possession of my new domain; christening it from that moment Mountjoy Manor; and here shall you, reading this, my dears, learn how it came by its name.

This done I called my men together and we hurried back to the Potomac reaching our boats by midnight and starting down the river for the *Lady Eleanor* as soon the next morning as the light would serve to steer by; for I had no time to lose.

We made better speed returning, having with us the swift current and the zest in rowing with which our joy and eager expectations had filled us.

As we neared the Falls we heard the sound of hammer and saw and the hum of men's voices which much amazed us, till, rounding the shoulder of a bluff we came in view of a group of men engaged in building a young ship—such was its dimensions we could call it nothing else. Her ribs and keel were in place and the work was proceeding right merrily. On the shore to welcome us stood Captain Herring, his gnarled and weather-beaten face on a broad grin and his eyes twinkling merrily.

“Sir John, ahoy!” he roared. “See you that, now? As Noah was commanded for to build the ark so hath it been borne in upon me that you would need help to move your ship's cargo to your new home. And what think



you? Will she not be trim and tidy and a useful craft when we shall step a mast into her and bend a sail on her? But will she have water, lads?" he asked, abruptly turning from me to his men who had been with me.

"Ay, ay, Captain; water enough were she twice as big."

And we all cheered as, led by the ship's carpenter, the busy men at work whined forth an old sea chorus.

For that inspiration I gave old Herring £50 in gold. He had used my carpenters and his own and with the lumber carried in the *Lady Eleanor* to serve in case of need he had, before the week was out, a craft that would carry a five ton cargo and might be propelled by wind or the which failing, by oars and poles against the current—coming down she needs no help. She hath made the trip up in a day and a half, and down in less than a day and hath already conveyed nearly all our dead weight to the hut we have built to house it on the shore, where it is well guarded.

Meantime the tents we brought with us have been taken over and erected on the hill with the due care old soldiers can give as to drainage and dryness. Each hath a fire-place of stones and clay, and all shall be housed in a week where we may live in comfort till Spring. The weather hath been good and already the logs are cutting for the main house; it shall be up and we in it and others well under way, if not finished, before March, together with the stockade surrounding all. But Eli Hunt says we need look for no Indians hereabouts before Spring hath fully come; and that when they do find us they will be friendly.

A way by land, long and tedious, was found to bring hither the horses, oxen and kine—and each beast bore a well packed burden. The sheep and swine and fowls came by the schooner and are fattening in the woods.



## CHAPTER XXXVII

### HE IS VISITED BY THE INDIANS

MOUNTJOY MANOR, 7th March, 1653.

LAST Sabbath-day, just after we had concluded our prayer-meeting (which in accordance with my custom, I conducted, reading the Scriptures and praying myself and calling upon others to do the same for we have none here willing to take upon himself the responsibility of preaching), came Eli Hunt from a sojourn in the woods ranging to the east and southeast, bringing intelligence that we were to be honored in a day or two with a visit from certain representative chiefs of the Doeg tribe of the Algonquin Indians. He said that the visit was to be a friendly one, the main object of which was, more than aught else, to satisfy the curiosity of the red men to know what manner of man it was who had taken up his home so far to the west of all other pale-faces in the Colony.

The Algonquins, he said, were the original and aboriginal owners of all the lands hereabouts, as well of much that is now settled east of us; that they had consented with little difficulty to the incoming of the whites but nevertheless it would be a kindly and gracious thing, and a wise, to entreat them hospitably and make them a few presents of the bright cloths and trinkets which they love, to the end that their good-will being gained we might have them for friends and allies instead of enemies.

The which doth agree with my views of justice and propriety; for I have not been able to understand that it is right to seize from them without compensation their lands, turning them out of their homes and driving them from their hunting-grounds merely because we are Christians and have the strength and power to do so. Nay, it seemeth



to me that the fact that we *are* Christians makes it only the more obligatory upon us that we shall treat them fairly; for how may we seek with good conscience to bring them to the worship of the One True God when we are robbing them of those things which all men, white or red, Christian or heathen, hold dear; without making good to them in some way the loss they suffer at our hands; or how can we recommend our God to them when we do such things? For we must bring them to Him; the which is our clear and bounden duty. What shall they think of a God whose worshippers are filled with dishonesty and hypocritical unrighteousness?

Despite Eli Hunt's assurances and doubtless firm belief in the friendliness of the coming Indian visitors still did I not deem it best to let them find me unprepared for something of a hostile nature; for the character of the unregenerate red man differs in no whit from that of the unregenerate white of whom it may safely be said that he will take no harm and be less likely to do the same if he be well watched. I therefore put matters in order as best I might; and was much helped by Eli Hunt's suggestions. And he agreed with me that it would be unwise to trust too much to appearances.

The logs to build the Manor House had been preparing with all possible speed, some of our men devoting themselves solely to that part of the work, and we found we had enough to form walls to several of our tents sufficient in number to shelter all the women and children; the walls were about eight feet high and made by piling log upon log between strong stakes firmly driven into the ground. This being done little more could be; save to place our property in such shape as to best protect it from pilfering and to drill the men into an understanding as to what each might have to do and what all should do in certain contingencies. Our four cannon were mounted so as to sweep the approaches from each of the four main points of the compass.

On Tuesday a runner or messenger from our visitors arrived with word that the main party would reach us in



the afternoon of Wednesday. Him we entertained with hospitality; and he seemed a decent, not unamiable fellow, with a surprising appetite, and a liking for strong waters which I took care to indulge but sparingly. That sunset I posted guards, or sentinels, a half mile distant from our camp and maintained them there the following day, with instructions to give warning if the savages attempted to come upon us by night; but to only precede them if they came by day—the which was but little different in any respect from our common daily usage, save that the guard was now made heavier.

The frost was now well out of the ground and the weather having been fine with no rain for some days the footing was firm and the delicate green of the freshly springing grass was just beginning to show in spots, here and there, and under the decaying leaves. The air had still an edge of sharpness but was most pleasant; the snow was nearly all gone from the mountain, and it was only in the very early morning that a little thin ice stayed in the margin of the brooks and about the rim of the small pools of standing water. The buds on the trees were but just beginning to swell but the oaks showed not yet their tassels nor have I yet been able to find any wild flowers.

At two of the clock on Wednesday our outlying sentinels sent word that the visitors were approaching; and soon, from our lookout they could be seen. They were about twenty in all and came forward in single file, stately and dignified in demeanor and yet moving with untiring swiftness such as we had noted in Eli Hunt's dog-trot gait when he led us hither. Arriving within say twenty paces of the line where we were drawn up awaiting them they suddenly came to the halt as one man and at a muttered word from their leader swung their line about till they stood facing us; then, with the precision of movement only gained by military training they stooped and laid their weapons on the ground before them, in the which action they were led and taught by their Chief. At this I gave command to my men to ground their arms also, which they did. The Indians



were armed chiefly with bows, war-clubs and tomahawks, albeit some few had fire-arms.

My men having thus divested themselves of their arms the Indian Chief stepped over his weapons advancing two paces, in the which movement he was closely imitated by his followers who all thus left their weapons behind them. I at once gave the order to my men to advance two paces; which they obeyed. The Chief then drew himself up with great dignity and threw back with a sweeping gesture his open right hand bringing it then sharply forward and extended towards me; whereupon I, not knowing when this pantomime should end, conceived it proper to take, myself, the lead; which I did by stepping forward and grasping the Chief's hand; my men following me, we were all thus clasping hands at once; with the red man's guttural grunts and the old English words of greeting mingling most oddly and yet with a cordial sound of sincerity and good fellowship.

For a moment this lasted till it became awkward and embarrassing to me; when I called forward Eli Hunt and bade him say my guests were welcome; and this he did manage to convey to them, he having some small understanding of their language and less use of it; but what he said was more by signs than in words. The Chief responded, his attitude and bearing being most eloquent whatever his words might have been. But Hunt got enough sense of it to interpret that he said that as I had welcomed them to my new they welcomed us to their old home and hoped that peace might ever rest between us. To this I gave fitting reply and then led the way to a ravine southwardly of the home site and distant a few hundred paces where I had provided food and refreshments for them; using with much reluctance I confess, a steer, a pig and a sheep from my small resources, which were roasted whole by swinging their carcasses in pits filled with live coals. To them I added other things in the way of food and my guests needed no second invitation, but proceeded to gorge themselves after their fashion and with a sur-



prising cleanliness and delicacy considering that they ate from their fingers, tearing the flesh in strips and so devouring it. It was with equal reluctance that I broached one of my few barrels of good October, and with a sparing hand that I dealt out some *aqua vita*, for which they showed a most prodigious liking.

During all this time the women-folk and children had kept within their tents as was enjoined upon them in advance, and saw but little of what was going forward; and thinking of that insatiable curiosity to which the gentle sex is said to be most addicted (it hath no place in the breast of man), I was wondering how they were enduring its pangs. Consulting with Hunt and feeling within and for myself that I should be safe in so doing but not forgetting to instruct Captain Taber as to the disposition of his men, I went to the tent and bade them be ready to come forth at signal, to witness the ceremony of the giving of the presents, which was next on the list and soon to be performed.

Leading the way, having the Chief on my right and Eli Hunt on my left, I brought them all to the summit of the hill and at the rear of the plateau on which the Manor House shall be set; where, Hunt having given them intimation of what was toward, they again ranged themselves in seemly order in front of me, my men doing the same in my rear. I then raised my hand and my trumpeter blowing a stirring blast those instructed beforehand as to the duty came filing out of the tents bringing the presents which they laid at my feet in ordered piles, or heaps. After them followed the women, led by the Lady Eleanor, dressed as if for a Court party, and stepping like a Queen.

Verily she hath a port and dignity which I have never seen equalled, and which doth so add to her five feet and four inches as to make her tower like a giant goddess. How she doth it I cannot conceive but am content to thank God for the beauty and imposingness of it and ask no questions. She was attired in a crimson silk bodice trimmed with point lace, a black tabby petticoat and silk hose with



high heeled shoes of fine leather gallooned, her head-dress was of lace secured by a monstrously elegant gold bodkin and a pearl and diamond necklace shone on her soft, white throat, to which her bejewelled fingers flashed prismatic signals as she slowly waved her beautiful great fan, the which she no more needed than she did another head, but it belonged to the costume and therefore must forth. How she can remember all that she had on, and the names thereof, puzzles my poor head, but she rattled it all off to me quite glibly an hour ago when I asked her that I might enter it here; and I have copied it down from my notes most faithfully, and know I have it right—all for your sakes, my dear grand-daughters, and may God bless you all.

My dear Dorothy was also most daintily attired in the sort of clothes that women wear, her mother Ruth more soberly, and the rest of them neatly but plainly, in their usual fashion—all but Betty.

It is truly a wondrous thing where all the whimses do originate that find lodgment in my sister Betty's brain. But there; the secret of them is with her and past finding out by my feeble wits.

She strode last, instead of next to Nell, as if she wished not to distract from the queenliness of the presentment of my dear by ranging her striking proportions too near her; but I thought I heard a gasp of astonishment from my admirably stoical guests at sight of her and I know I gasped myself, ere I could bethink me to hold my proper phlegmatic poise. She was dressed as a squaw; but such a squaw!

Leggings of the finest dressed deer-skins bordered with many colored beads and quills clung softly about her mighty limbs half revealing their rounded symmetrical perfection, while gaily bedecked moccasins were on her feet; a coat of the same soft and cream-colored stuff also elaborately and beautifully ornamented with beads and a bright fringe of birds' feathers reaching to her hips was not full enough to hide her magnificent figure, but adapted itself loosely to the sweeping curves of her body; her long shining, brown hair was evenly parted in the middle and hung



nearly to her knees in two lustrous plaits, while a twisted wampum formed a coronet in the front of which blazed her great diamond cross, and over her left shoulder sweeping under her right arm, and carelessly held in front by her great, white, shapely hand she wore a bright blue blanket. She trod the earth like a being from the upper world and the calm glances from her tranquil, clear, deep, moss-brown eyes, swept over the scene, and all there, like the strong and fearless regard of an Empress.

Indeed, at first glance I was jealous for Nell; but turning to her, my fears subsided. There was no comparison; for each in her way, was incomparable. And yet, perhaps 'twas best the long line of common creatures stood between them.

Eli Hunt seemed the only man of us who was not surprised; and a merry glance that shot between Betty and him told me where she had, doubtless, got her savage finery.

To the Chief I gave a fine coat of red plush (whether crimson or scarlet I know not; nor doth it matter since the one is red and so is the other), which showed divertingly comical over his copper-colored hide. And yet he put it on in haste and was mighty proud of it as well as of the beaver-hat and gold-headed cane I gave him; besides these there fell to him a bolt of red and blue cloth, very gaudy, and a pound or two of beads; he cast many longing glances at my pistols and sword but I was not minded to furnish him any of the weapons of warfare.

To the others were allotted presents of less magnificence; and when all was done I paid over to each a half-pistole, explaining, through Hunt, that while I gained title from the English Government which by conquest held title paramount to all these lands, I wished not that any should feel I had not paid him for his share in what I held. At which there was much apparent satisfaction; each savage coming forward to take my hand and grunt in my face with great cordiality.

I then presented them to the Lady Eleanor who swept



them the old courtesy with, I think, an extra frill or two added in honor of the occasion, and leading them down the line gave Betty her innings. And 'twas most curious to see their looks of delighted wonderment at a squaw so tremendous. The Mistress Betty enjoyed it to the full, giving each a shake of the hand (as a courtesy would have been out of place in that dress), and with each grasp of her strong fingers she spent such vigor that pain and astonishment contended in the poor victim's face, her countenance, the while, firmly majestic in expression, with naught to betray appreciation of what was toward save a twinkle far down in her eye.

The Chief, after his salutation, stood raptly gazing at her as if enthralled and transfixed for a while; then glancing down at his coat and taking off his hat and regarding it, caressing the shining head of his cane and looking lovingly on his red and blue cloth, the while his fingers ran tenderly through his beads, he seemed to ponder; once more he gazed at Betty then at his prized finery and then turned and stalked thoughtfully to and fro a short distance apart. I was much amused, and yet dared show none of it.

Finally he walked up to me in great haste his face speaking with the tense strength of a great resolution painfully reached, and hurriedly drawing off his coat and hat and laying them with his cane, cloth and beads at my feet spoke a few earnest words rapidly to Hunt, at the close waving his arm with a significant gesture towards Betty who was standing calm, serene and indifferent—but mightily alive to it all.

“He says he will give back your gifts in exchange for the great squaw.”

The poor fellow's face was pitiful in the expression of lofty sacrifice; the gifts were inexpressibly dear to him and yet he would give them up to gain Betty! Nor could I find it in my heart to blame or criticize him.

Turning to the statuesque young woman, I said, with great gravity—



"Mistress Elizabeth Baldwin, the great and mighty Chief What's-his-name of the Doeg tribe of the Algonquin Indians, a family of high repute and lately Lords of all these parts, doth lay his heart at thy feet, and his red coat, new hat, cane, cloth and beads at mine, and doth require of me thy hand in lawful wedlock. He probably hath no more than a dozen or so of other wives but he feeleth that life without thee will be but a dry and dreary pilgrimage while with thee it shall be a joyous progress through an unimaginable Paradise and all his other squaws shall be thy servants and slaves, and thou shalt have no other Lord nor Master on earth than he. What sayest thou beauteous maiden? Wilt drown the cruel pangs of his burning love in the sweet ocean of a swift meeting reciprocity?"

Betty was hard hit and I greatly feared her risibles would give way. But, while her eyes danced madly, she replied with equal gravity—

"Tell His Red Highness, my good Sir John, that the Lord of Mountjoy Manor hath no more to do with the bestowal of my sweet young affections than hath that other loon rising from the brookside yonder; and that if he would win me he must woo me for himself."

"Nay," ejaculated Hunt; "these Indians be rough wooers. When one conceives a fancy for a squaw he seizes her by her long hair and drags her to his wigwam. That is their way of wooing."

"Faith, then," said Betty, still mightily grave and majestic, "if he tries that with me I'll e'en introduce a new fashion in the higher circles of the Doeg dynasty; for I shall take the trouble to break his Highness in two at the small of his august back, over my knee!"

"Come Betty," I cried; "fly not in the face of Providence. Remember that thou art already somewhat more than sweet sixteen, nor shouldst thou be recklessly prodigal with such opportunities as may come to thee. Even if it is the first offer thou hast ever had——" (and then her eye flashed for an instant as she turned on me, but at once she resumed her steadiness) "thou shouldst not flout



it for it may happen to be also the last. Do you understand that he offers all these fine things back to me in payment for thee? Now, indeed, I am so greatly concerned that thou shalt make a Royal alliance that I'll give them all to thee, aye, and throw in, to cap his offer and make it more enticing, a bonny blue ribbon for thy bonny squaw hair, when my ship next comes in. Relent, fair enchantress, relent."

But Betty answered most gravely.

"John Baldwin, get this poor fool out of his misery with all speed, or I'll scream with laughter and so spoil all and hurt the poor fellow's feelings besides. An if I do I promise thee I'll so box thy ears that they shall ring for a twelve-month. Have done with thy foolery."

While all this was going on the eyes of the anxious Chief followed our lips, turning from one to the other with a pathetic eagerness that was truly pitiful; and, as Betty bade me, I "put him out of his misery" as gently as I might manage. When Hunt got through with his interpretation a look of great relief came into the Chief's face, and eagerly gathering up his trumpery he strode away like one escaping a bad bargain.

Then would I have given £1000 willingly for the privilege of rolling on the ground and letting the mirth that was bursting me, have way. My sister Betty's face was a study.

"Why, then, my sweet sister, thou hast made him the happiest man on earth."

"O John, please let us go some place where I may laugh or I'll die."

"Sure, in his poor heathen way, he shall thank God all his days that he hath come so safely out of his great peril. Think! he stood to lose not only his red coat and things but to gain thee, too; and he hath been delivered from the yawning jaws of this most parlous possibility."

"John, John, if you love me, stop, or hide me quickly somewhere."

The Indians performed for us some of their religious



and war-dances and we sang Psalms to them to their great amazement. Then the Chief made a long harangue which, being interpreted, meant that having had their legs under our mahogany (so to speak), they would henceforth be our friends and allies; and that in our hour of need they would spring to our rescue upon summons. For the which I thanked them and in return pledged our sincerest sympathy in all their just and proper aims and bade them come to me whenever I could serve them. To wind up, we gave them a salute with our great guns and they trotted back as they came, their wild shouts echoing through the valley till they died away at last in the distance.

Eli Hunt assures me that I have done a good day's work; that there is no human nature so easily and permanently affected by kindness as that of the Indians.

"They will be true to you to the death if you but treat them fairly."

And that will I do, God being my helper; for wild as they are, they are His handiwork.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### UNTO HIM A SON IS BORN

MOUNTJOY MANOR, 10th October, 1653.

BORN this day, at 10 of the clock in the morning, unto John Baldwin, Knt., and Eleanor Hedges Baldwin, his wife, a son; weighing eleven pounds two ounces; and his name shall be called John.

Praise the Lord, O, my soul! For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given!

Surely my cup runneth over! Thou, O Lord hast remembered Thy tender mercies and Thy loving kindnesses: for they have been ever of old!

I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being!

O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the people!

Sing unto Him; sing psalms unto Him: talk ye of all His wondrous works!

Remember His marvelous works that he hath done; His wonders and the judgments of His mouth!

I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.\*

O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever!

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O, Most High:

\* Poor dear, old, addled John! He can doubtless do many things with the spirit and with the understanding also; but he verily cannot sing. He hath a voice like a crow's. And all day he hath been crazy as a loon, bless his great soul!

BETTY BALDWIN—Spinster!

THE MANOR, 10th October, 1653.



To show forth Thy loving kindness in the morning,  
and Thy faithfulness every night!

My soul had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!

Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!

The Lord bless thee and keep thee, O, my son; The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, O, my son!

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER XXXIX

### HE ENCOUNTERETH A LOT OF OLD WOMEN AND IS DISCOMFITED

THE MANOR, 15th October.

THE first opportunity I have had for opening up with my dear a matter that hath weighed upon my mind for several days came this morning and I at once availed myself of it. There hath been but scant ceremony used with me by Betty, and Ruth, the mother of Dorothy, and sundry old women who have been in attendance upon the Lady Eleanor, and who have assumed unbecoming airs of authority towards me. Even my dear Dorothy hath been now and again a shade or so abrupt, if not impatient, with me at the which I have been somewhat grieved and yet do not feel to blame her altogether since she hath an untoward example set her by her elders who ought to know better; while as for my sister Betty, she hath tried me almost beyond endurance with her assumptions which have not hesitated to set at naught mighty nigh all the respect which is my due as the Lord of the Manor and the father of him who shall inherit it and, by God's blessing, shall perfect and carry forward to full and beneficent fruition the plans and purposes which his pater having doubtless a less keen and subtle mental endowment hath designed, most faultily, it may be, and yet in the fear of God and no man.

These same women have guarded the door of my dear's chamber like so many she-dragons; and with a fussy pertness that hath been intolerably offensive, denying me all opportunity of advising with the Lady Eleanor upon a matter of the highest importance and which admits of no delay, for it hath many points that should be settled betimes; nay, for days I have been permitted to speak to



her only in the presence of one or more of them and that for only the briefest moment and at rare intervals. And this Welsh doctor, Absalom Chenowith, hath backed them up in their foolishness, and hath made himself most repugnant by the masterful way in which he hath assumed sole authority in the respect of the Lady Eleanor and my son John. How fantastic and ridiculous men of a certain nature do ever become when in an emergency they find themselves charged with a matter of momentary responsibility.

Where should be my place, as her loving husband and the father of her child but constantly by the side of my dear, when, in the hour of her crowning glory she is physically weak and delicate? What should more conduce to the speedy recovery of her bodily strength and the joy of her heart than to have me by her to discourse of and discuss with her the future of our son and the many things concerning his rearing, education, and perfecting in manliness that do press for prompt consideration, with the manner in which he shall administer the affairs which I shall some day, by reason of the infirmities of age or at the approach of death, surrender up to him? His whole future is to be planned and mapped out with loving and fore-seeing care that he may live his career with no uncertainty as to each successive step therein.

What? Shall we launch him upon an unknown sea without chart or compass to steer by? Are we barbarians that we should abandon him to the rude chances of the unruly tides and bewilderingly capricious currents of this great sea of life without having first laid down, hard and fast, the rules by which he must govern himself in each and every conceivable contingency? Shall we not, out of our own experience, furnish him with that knowledge which shall serve him in his every time of need?

And doth not the circumstance that it is already apparent that our loving Father hath endowed him with unusual mental power and a marvelous acuteness of mind make it all the more our duty to digest a complete plan of life



for him—we, upon whom the responsibility hath been placed by an Authority Which may not err?

For while it may be confessed that his appearance at the present is not what might be termed indisputably intellectual, yet are there many things which go to show that he is by no means a common child. He hath a way of moving and using his hands which doth indicate great decision of character as hath been shown by his manner of clinging to my thumb, the which doth also testify to a wondrous precocity of affection for the author of his being the like whereof I am persuaded not many children of his age have ever before exhibited. There is that, too, in the way in which his eyes, when he is not sleeping, do ever seek the light, and dwell upon bright and shining objects, such as my watch or my sword-hilt, the candle by the bedside, or the wandering sun-beam hovering over him, which, to him who hath intelligent reason for his guide is the clearest indication of such powers of perceiving and noting that which is noteworthy, as are truly and peculiarly remarkable. That he hath come into the world with such native energy and persistent and unwearying industry as can characterize but few men in an epoch is evinced in a thousand ways and in the most striking manner when he is engaged at the maternal fount in drawing thence that sustenance which God hath provided for the due and proper nourishment of his physical frame. That he is of a strongly commanding will which shall make him the successful ruler of many is proved by the manner in which his slightest cry, when he (not infrequently) lifteth up his voice, doth reach and affect all within the sound thereof, sending the women scurrying hither and thither in the most insistent haste, and even affecting me most sensibly.

The thus enforced abstention from the society of my dear and the pressing importance of a thorough consultation with her upon these plans for our son John's future life so weighed upon me that I became exceeding alert for the chance to be with her undisturbed; and when it came I seized upon it gladly.



My dear Nell, never, in her proudest moment, looked so sweet and lovely as she did an hour ago when I entered her chamber and sat down by her bed-side; for the soft and gracious charm of motherhood had come to heighten all those others which in her are incomparable. And, as we conversed her eyes grew ever brighter and the rosy color swept up to burn more and more vividly in her cheeks, while her voice, which at first was weak and low and almost inaudible, gathered strength and power till at last it shrilled forth as loudly and melodiously as the notes of the singing birds that so fill our groves with their Heaven-taught harmony. Most eagerly did she enter into the details of all that I had so elaborately thought out and was each moment growing more earnestly and enthusiastically interested when we were interrupted.

I had not got far; merely to the outline of his college career at Oxford where he shall be most thoroughly educated and take all honors; his year or two to be spent on the Continent under proper chaperonage to make the grand tour as becomes one of his birth, breeding and expectations; of his taking service for another year or so in the army of some one or other of the European states, or, it may be, that of the Commonwealth, where, beginning with perhaps a Captâncy he shall rise rapidly by reason of his high courage and brilliant abilities (for we are both agreed that a course at arms will be of the greatest service, not only to give him polish but to also fit him for his place as a leader here); of his coming home in his own ship, the *Lady Eleanor* (if she be still staunch and seaworthy), unless I shall see fit to buy him a better vessel as more befitting the dignity and importance he shall then have; of his taking charge here of the direction and administration of the affairs of our little Mountjoy Colony (which by then will be greatly increased and enlarged in size of territory, for I have already prepared a memorial to the Lord General asking for another ten mile square of land to be patented in my son's own name), while I shall tranquilly pursue the arts of agriculture, and, with my



dear, rejoice with all godly gratitude at the success that shall attend our son's management and government—unless, indeed, as is most likely, his great abilities shall have by then so impressed the rulers of the Commonwealth as that they shall compel him to assume the honor and responsibility of the office of the Commonwealth's Governor of the Colony of Virginia—in truth these matters had scarcely been entered into, nor the discussion of the methods by which the various steps should be made possible, nor had the contemplation of the glory of his performances been half enjoyed when my sister Betty, coming suddenly into the chamber and giving a quick glance at Nell, incontinently seized me by the ear and, rapidly drawing me to the door, cried gaspingly—

“O John, John, what hast thou done? Hast thou not the sense with which thou wast born?” She spoke in a low tone so that Nell should not hear.

“What, now, Betty,” I replied sternly: “What new whimsey is this? Nay, I'll not have it.”

“Dost not see how thou hast worked her into a fever with thy foolish boy's dreams for the future of a five-days-old babe that hath not yet its eyes open? How could you? Go, this instant, for Dr. Chenowith; and then, if thou canst not occupy thy mind with other things without coming hither to do harm get on thy knees and pray God for forgiveness; and may He in His mercy grant that thou hast not brought our darling to her grave!”

Now, all this was of course the most arrant nonsense; but to humor her I went for Chenowith howbeit unwillingly; for as I have said he is all too conceited already. He glanced sharply at me when I called him and gave him Betty's message to come at once, and asking hotly, “What hast thou done now, Sir John?” fled swiftly to the Manor House without waiting for my reply. And for that I was sorry, for I am full tired of all this nonsense and unbecoming behavior towards me, and if he had but tarried I should have given my gentleman a dressing down such as he would never have forgot, I promise you. For I



did thy grandmother no harm, but good; for was she not more and more animated the longer I talked with her?

Still, till my dear is up and about I shall let Betty have her way; for with all her ignorance and that crooked conception of me which doth make her blind to my true qualities, she is the dearest and best of womankind—after Nell.

And so I'll e'en spend my time here in the furthest chamber from her in the house (for nowhere else under the same roof would Betty let me bide); and with my pipe and my quill pass the time till they shall learn that I have done my dear more good in one short hour by my presence and cheering conversation than they can with all their idle nostrums and foolish fussiness.

It is indeed a most marvelous and mysterious thing to me that God hath made poor and feeble-witted creatures of so many of the people here on earth. The less they know and the more incapable they are of exercising any wit of discernment the more they seem to think they know; and the more stupidly conceited they are.

But there! Good sense is too precious a commodity, I am persuaded, to be bestowed at haphazard; and our God never does things in that way; He erreth not in anything; for with Him is perfect wisdom.



## CHAPTER XL

### HE REPENTETH OF HIS SIN IN SACKCLOTH AND ASHES

THE MANOR, 22d October, 1653.

GOD be merciful to me a sinner.

God be merciful to me the chief of sinners! Aye, and the most outrageously doltish, conceited, blind and vain-glorious ass, knave, villain, and fool, that ever He hath permitted to cumber the earth.

That I should set myself up to believe that I know more than anyone else on earth when even any old woman about the place knows more in her small finger than I know in all my great body; that I should vaunt myself for my wit and plume myself on my knowledge and good sense when a child like my dear Dorothy hath more of all, and the little Welsh doctor towers above me like a giant, in his intellectuals.

But God is merciful, blessed be His Name! And He hath again showed His mercy upon me, by saving from the grave my dear wife and our son, both of whom I, in my vanity, went far to plunge into the very jaws of Death. O, that He may forgive me my presumptuous sin, and that it may be given to me to walk henceforth in all humility before Him, and my fellows here on earth. I, who would rather have died for them!

For by my foolish babblings with my dear, when in the sinful pride and proper joy of my heart I disregarded all injunctions and warnings, and wrought the poor, weak creature into a high state of excitement—(the worst thing that could have happened to her in her condition)—I brought on an attack of fearful fever, which, but for the goodness of God and the skill of Dr. Chenowith aided by the unwearied and unselfish ministrations of Betty and



Ruth and Dorothy and the other women would have killed her, and with her our son.

I have not the will nor courage to dwell upon the events of the past week. It hath been and I shall ever look back to it as a black and dreadful nightmare, filled with visions too awful for tongue to speak of or mind to dwell upon.

It is over now; and I humbly thank God for it. I knelt on my knees to crave the pardon of the doctor but Absalom Chenowith at sight of me thus, went white and bursting into a passion of tears in his turn begged my forgiveness—for what, I know not; for he hath done only that which was loving and right and wise. I would have knelt to Betty but she prevented me with kisses; and when I essayed to humble myself to the old women she took me by the ear, as she is fond of doing, and marched me out of the room.

J. B.



## CHAPTER XLI

### PROGRESS ON THE MANOR

THE MANOR, 27th November, 1653.

A WEEK ago Eli Hunt came back from one of his long rambles (lasting for days, and at times weeks together) with news that the *Lady Eleanor* had arrived and was lying at her old anchorage, below the Great Falls. This was a good hearing, for I had been longing for news from home and I at once went to her.

This is the second voyage the *Lady Eleanor* hath made to England and back since first she brought us here, a year or more ago. Homeward bound she hath laded both times with tobacco, which I, buying from the Potomac and James River planters for good gold, instructed Master Job Herring to sell for me on his reaching London (for there we do our trading now); agreeing that for thus acting as my factor in addition to his other duties he should have half the profits. And so well hath he managed that he hath lodged to my credit in London £1,500, as my share for the year; taking to himself a like sum. Returning he hath brought the many commodities we require here and for which we must rely upon old home resources, not only in the way of food and clothing but of household gear, farming utensils, tools of all kinds, powder, and luxuries, too.

This, however, hath been the smallest part of what he hath brought us. At his first sailing I bade him recruit me good honest men of various trades and crafts such as could be used here including millers and mill-wrights, brewers, tanners, carpenters and masons, brick-masons and farmers; and to bring no man who had no useful trade to his hand nor one who could not fight; and I also bade him bring wives and children, too, but to see to it in all cases



that they were able and in the perfectest bodily health. And this he hath done; adding last June seventy souls to our numbers, of whom forty were males of more than fourteen years of age, and all godly adherents of the true faith. The number with him on this last voyage, to remain with us, is eighty-three, of whom forty-five are males of the proper age. So that we have now at the Manor a Colony of near two hundred and twenty souls, about one hundred and twenty of whom are drilled every Saturday afternoon by Captain Taber and myself in military exercises, and by Eli Hunt when he is here in the art of war as practised by the Indians, or such part of their methods as it is fitting for Christians to use.

The progress we have made in our place has been great, all things considered. A commodious structure of hewn logs and with six rooms, four below (counting the hall as one) and two above, with a great kitchen at the back, hath been built for the use of my own family, while surrounding this main house are ranged, at a distance of a hundred paces, cabins for my men and their families, all of substantial logs, hewn on the inside. These I have connected by a log palisade, the logs sharpened and driven into the ground; and where there is not this palisade there is the outer wall of a cabin, in the which are no windows nor doors, but small portholes for firearms are cut. So that the whole formeth a square, with the Manor House in the center, save at the East side, where we have built log stables with solid outer walls, like unto the cabins, where we may in emergency house our horses and cattle.

The four pieces of cannon brought with us are mounted on elevated platforms at the four corners of the square, and can be used in any direction, their missiles flying clear of our defenses. Within our square we have abundance of water from the two springs from which issue the brooks of which I have heretofore spoken. A large and well drained cellar is under my house; smaller ones under some of the cabins, and a good, dry, and well protected magazine hath been constructed under the West side



of the hill where our powder is stored. The forest hath been well cleared on all sides of us for a convenient distance, leaving however, here and there, a tree or two, or a clump of them, for shade and ornament.

While all this was being prepared a certain number of our men have been at work on the farming operations outside the walls; and the harvest hath been most abundant and pleasing. We have raised, the past year, a large field of corn, which has grown most luxuriantly, and another of potatoes, with which the results have been truly marvelous. I planted only enough tobacco to supply our own wants, but put out a goodly experiment in wheat which throve as well as the corn did, so that, with the mill which I hope to build this winter on the West brook (which gives good power) we shall by this time twelve-month and with God's good blessing, be independent of all outside help for flour and all other absolutely necessary food.

The chase hath yielded the fullest supplies of venison, bear's-meat and smaller game and birds, and I have but to send to the river where the finest fish are to be had for the taking. We had upon our table yesterday, a wild-turkey weighing over forty pounds before he was plucked; and his flavor was most delicate, as Master Herring is qualified to swear to.

The good Herring hath brought us, on this last trip, about two wagon-loads of fine fat oysters in the shell, from the Chesapeake; the which we shall store in a cool cellar and keep fresh with occasional dashes of salt-water. He also brought a few ducks shot on the Lower Potomac, which have a more toothsome richness than any I ever before ate. They have white backs for the most part and some of them red heads; and when things are more settled I am minded to become better acquainted with their ways and the places where they do resort.

At each voyage we have added to our live-stock until we have now twenty head of horses, fifteen cows, two bulls, nine yoke of oxen, sixty sheep, and eighty swine, all of which were brought over, and they are increasing and



multiplying so rapidly that we may soon count on them to help supply our larders; so far we have killed none save those fed to the Indians last spring, relying on venison, bear's-meat and other game for a change from the bacon, hams and salt-beef brought over, or bought for us below, by Master Herring.

Thus hath the goodness of God followed and sustained us. There could be no better health than all have enjoyed. May we so live as to deserve these blessings.



## CHAPTER XLII

### CHRISTMAS IN VIRGINIA IN 1653

THE MANOR, 4th January, 1654.

OUR first Christmas in Virginia, that of '52, was sparingly celebrated and under some stress of the hardships belonging to our newly-arrived and unsettled condition; but the day of the birth of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is an anniversary very precious to me, and to my dear as well (albeit many of our sour kind of Christians affect to ignore it alleging that its observance is an idle thing and savoring of papistry), wherefore we agreed together that that of '53 should be observed in the good old English style, with the giving of presents a great feast for all, music, mirth and all becoming merriment. For we felt that we might thus show not only our joy that a Redeemer had been raised up for us and all other poor, weak sinners who shall accept the salvation He offers without money and without price, but likewise our gratitude for the many and great blessings and benefits we have received at the hand of the Most Loving and Ever Merciful Father.

For surely, we said, His goodness and mercy have followed us all our days! Nor had we opportunity, even if time had served to reckon up all that He hath done for us; for before us laughing and crowing with a joyous sagacity never before equaled by any child born of woman lay our son John, the light of our eyes, the crowning gift of God, and that which we worship next to Him who gave him. In that presence serious and methodical calculations of any sort were impossible, constantly interrupted as they were by the sweet, babbling jargon of the proud mother,



and no less by the more dignified manly endearments of the father.

So we put it down a week in advance and sent forth the announcement to all our people, that Christmas would be celebrated at the Manor House in such a fashion as should make all forget that they were not in Old England and as would warm their homesick hearts to the new abiding place, which, with God's good will, shall become as dear to their children as their father's hearths are to the parents. They were encouraged to promise the children a visit from the Christmas gift-giver, and to hang the stockings of the youngsters by the chimneys in the good old way; they were further notified that at 9 of the clock on Christmas morning they would be expected to meet in the great hall of the Manor House for religious worship and praise, to be followed by a great feast to be given by the Lord of the Manor to all his people and to any and every comer, to begin at 2 of the clock in the afternoon; that at 7 in the evening, there should be a reassembling (of all save those upon watch and the like) to sing Psalms and godly hymns and to conclude the whole round with music and dancing. And all were enjoined to rejoice in the mighty salvation that God hath raised up for us in the house of His servant David.

This message, I say, was sent to each family and every person and, by the most, the word was received with gladness; but by some with a frowardness which was a sore annoyance to me. There be ever those ready at all times and all places to spoil sport and to sow bitterness and fault finding in the midst of the sweetest honesty; those who are never so happy as when they are miserable in the contemplation of a sin which by over-much zeal in works of supererogation they have sought and found in another. Nor was it to be reasonably hoped that amongst all those I have brought hither there should be no schismatics whatsoever; for, choose you never so wisely and carefully, some will get in to breed trouble. Was not Judas Iscariot among the Twelve?



And so it came to pass that there were those who were faint hearted as to the lawfulness of the observance of the Day, saying that it was a papist custom and must therefore be sinful; and others who drew down the corners of their mouths and narrowed their eyes and cried out against the music (save the Psalms and hymns) and the dancing, as savoring of the things of the Devil. And these matters coming to my ears, I sent for the froward ones, and when they came we reasoned the matter out to a happy and satisfactory conclusion.

There were some half score or so of the fellows and they looked mighty solemn and stern, and important, as they fronted me; the which looks they carried not with them however, when they went out from me. With the premise that I had heard of their complaints, doubts, misgivings, and the heart-burnings that they were tormented with as concerning the festivities with which it was proposed to observe at Mountjoy Manor the anniversary of the birth of our Saviour, and had heard of them so fully that it was not necessary that I should put any to the trouble of recounting them, and that I was likewise familiar with the fallacious sophistries which, only, can be urged in support of the same, I said that I had sent for them in order that we might consider as Christian men with all love and charity for each other and in all fairness what accommodation we might come to in order that peace and harmony might prevail.

"For," I said, "there is nothing more dear to any one of us I am persuaded, than liberty of conscience and the right to worship God according to the dictates thereof. That error should creep into the hearts of even God's Elect is not a matter at which we should be greatly surprised since, as King Solomon himself hath declared, 'there is no man that sinneth not'; and, as the Preacher hath said in Ecclesiastes, 'there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not'; and even David, the man after God's own heart, erred and strayed away from His face; nay," I cried, "shall not even we of the Saving Rem-



nant by great searchings of heart find, each for himself, the record therein written of his own waywardness and lamentable weakness?

“But God forbid that such error, so creeping in shall be allowed to prevail; nor shall it; but as Christian men we will cast it from us that His grace may have free course and be glorified. So that naught remains but that those who have erred in thinking these things wrong, *videlicet*:—the observing of Christmas Day, and the celebrating of it with music and dancing, shall, receiving the assurance of that error, that it truly is error (which I do hereby give unto them), abjure the same and remove out of their hearts all fear thereof and resolutely repress and destroy all obstinate regard and respect for that deception in this thing whereinto the Great Enemy of souls hath led them. You will therefore, thus freed from a restraining and unlawful bondage be present at the said celebration; and, with hearts filled with all godly mirth enter most joyously into all that shall go forward in thankfulness to God for His mercies.”

Said one (who shall be nameless; for I would have the record show naught that may bring to the cheek of any man’s descendant the blush of shame on account thereof), said one—

“But, Sir John; my conscience doth tell me that these things are sinful snares set by Satan to trap our souls. And shall I not have liberty to follow the leadings of my conscience?”

“No man shall here be deprived of that liberty of conscience for which we have all striven on the field of battle; winning the victory through the grace given us by God, to Whom be all the honor and glory.”

“Then,” said he, “my conscience forbidding me, I may e’en refrain from entering upon these diversions.”

“Nay then,” I answered, “thou mayst do no such thing as refrain. For thou art in error; and what friend should I be to thee did I not cast the evil thing out of thee? Aye, thou shalt, indeed, join in those proper merry-makings



which have been devised for the celebrating of Christmas Day on Mountjoy Manor."

"But my conscience forbids," he persisted.

"Tut, man! Thy conscience doth nothing of the sort; for, look you, thy conscience may not forbid those things which are innocent and wholesome, as are these things. Now that I look upon thy face more attentively I am persuaded that by too much gross feeding thou hast deranged thy inwards, bringing upon thyself bilious fancies and follies which have of olden and long time oft deceived the very elect; thou shalt therefore get thee to Absalom Chenowith, who shall provide for thee a caphalick and cordial electuary which shall purge away these corrupt humors which do poison thy understanding. This being done thou shalt be made fit for the merry-makings on Christmas night; and thou shouldst lost no time in choosing and duly inviting the lady who shall walk the minuet with thee, for there be fewer women than men with us, and it is ever first come first served in these affairs, my friend. The deliberation is adjourned and I most heartily congratulate you all that after so full and fair a consideration a settlement and conclusion so wise, happy and harmonious hath been reached, aye, without dissent from any. It augurs well for our Christmas."

And yet it seemed to me that even while they sipped the brandy I had set before them as a farewell some did look as if they would have liked to dispute the point still further; the which, for a moment, was a mispleasure to me.

But there; God hath, for his own wise purposes, sent all sorts and kinds of men upon earth; and among them are many who can neither understand nor accept conscientious leading; no, not even though one should rise from the dead, as it were, to teach them.

We are enjoined to avoid foolish questions and contentions and strivings about the law which are unprofitable and vain; and it is my purpose, God being my helper, not to permit such things among the dwellers upon Mountjoy



Manor; and verily the sooner this shall be well known and understood of all men hereabouts the better it shall be for those of captious tendencies.

And so, from this time on all preparations went briskly and smoothly forward; that sweet harmony that cometh with wise agreement among men mutually bearing and forbearing, prevailing among us.

And surely a man may well reflect upon the recognition and reward that doth ever follow speedily upon godly doing in this world. The Lady Eleanor is as am I in all matters of religion, abhorring all papistical devices for the deceiving of the elect; but she hath as have I too a great regard for that which is good and approved remaining unto the Episcopal remnant. She would pronounce her marriage vows before none other than a man duly ordained by the laying on of the hands of those Apostolically descended and confirmed in that work; wherefore the good Dr. Browning, Bishop of Exeter, was procured by the loving Lord General to tie the knot; and since the birth of our son John, she (and Betty with her) have been greatly exercised concerning that young gentleman's christening, the which she would have had done on the eighth day of his age had there been the means at hand, and she in her right mind (for she was then on the brink of the grave, where I, alas! by my foolish vanity had put her) and had ever been longing for a miracle which should send hither a clergyman regularly ordained by a Bishop, to perform the ceremony; declaring that no other should. And to this view she made me a willing convert.

But what were we to do in this isolated place so far from the habitations of those who have the ministrations of the Episcopal clergy? The thought that our son might die unbaptized was a constant source of grief and trouble to her; but I told her that God did not waste good material in that way; and that, having sent to the House of Baldwin in the Wilderness a son of most remarkable parts and promise He would not permit him to be taken away save



at the end of a long life spent in godly works for the benefit of those who shall come after us here.

But, truly, the miracle was performed; for it was only the day after I had gently led my schismatics back into the true path and set their feet firmly therein that there came riding to us, under pilotage of one of the Doeg Indians who had visited us nearly a year ago, the Rev. James Tillottson; who hath a sort of a roving commission to work in the Colony for the promotion of the welfare of the Church. That he was joyfully welcomed may well be thought. Not only was I mightily pleased to see him but Nell and Betty fairly groveled before him in the excess of their joy that now John might be properly christened; and they so bowed down to him and molly-coddled him that I feared for his Reverence, lest, happen he were weak in his intellectuals, he might mistake himself for something other and better than that he is. But his brain and heart are sound, and he took no false conceit in the matter; discharging his every duty here with a discretion and delicacy that made me love him.

So, the Lord having sent His servant for the purpose the word was put forth to our invited guests that the baptism of John should be had at the religious worship on Christmas Day; with an invitation to all who were unbaptized to be also brought forward at the same time.

This having been done and the notices served and I being in the great hall, the next day, musing over my pipe, to me entered Captain Edward Taber, my lieutenant in managing my forces and with him the doctor, Absalom Chenowith, and my dear Dorothy, too, forsooth, blushing like Aurora, and looking so sweet that I e'en kissed her forthwith and with no waiting for the news of their errand to me. Ned was looking as firm and soldierly as he usually doth and his face was grave enough but filled with a look of peaceful satisfaction and most handsomely set off by the softened shining of his eyes. I was, it may be, a bit drowsy, but the peculiar fidgets of the little doctor began soon to rouse me—for I had never seen him



so nervous before—(he being one of those trig little men who do ever ride themselves with a stiff bit and a taut rein)—when the door at my back opened and the Lady Eleanor, the Mistress Betty, and Ruth the mother of Dorothy, came in and ranged themselves behind my chair. These things proceeding in so orderly a way and as if by preconcerted arrangement aroused me yet more, and I looked about for an explanation. But all (save Ned) seemed somewhat discomposed, and at this I marveled yet again. At last, much mystified, I cleared my throat with the most sonorous *ahem* I could summon:—

“My Lords and Ladies,” began I; “your visit doth honor your unworthy servant most highly; but, in good faith, my poor wits are at a loss to decide from the expressions you wear whether it is to my coronation or my beheading that you are come. But whichever it may be you may as well lead on for you outnumber me and carry more and heavier guns—there being in front of me two men who have proven themselves most potent allies of him who rides upon the pale horse, as St. John tells us, and a young Amazon who dazzleth me, more shame to her, with flashes from the wickedest pair of eyes that ever I saw in a human head; while I am cut off from retreat by a heavy battery of matrons, and a spinster such as a bolder man than John Baldwin might well fear to engage. He is a foolish soldier who defies the Fates! I am in your hands and ask no mercy; and whether I am to go by Ned’s sword, or Absalom’s physic, death can take a shape no more dreadful.”

Still they all looked mighty solemn, save Betty and Dorothy, who shot glances of understanding at each other.

“Sir John——” began Chenowith quaveringly—

“Bless my soul,” I cried; “the man is ill! Hast thou been fool enough to sample thine own physic?”

“Nay,” broke in Betty, most demurely; “he desireth that you shall prescribe him a dose which shall make him more trouble, all his life, and far sicker, than any physicks he hath at command of his Welsh-Latin incantations.”



And then, when I saw Dorothy shake her fist behind her father's back at Betty a great light, as it were, began to shine in upon me.

"Sir John"—again began Chenowith; but I stayed him.

"Absalom Chenowith, I had hoped better things of you. Welshmen have ever borne a most scandalous reputation as unscrupulous thieves—and yet, till now, I thought, I say, better things of you. Have I not always entreated you most fairly and kindly?"

"You have, Sir John, but"—

"But me no buts, thou ingrate! Did I not but a month or two ago do you a great despite criticizing you most unjustly and abusing you most shamefully and unwarrantably when instead I should have been showing you the most lively gratitude—did I not, sir? (and I demanded a yea or nay answer), make a most abject ass of myself"—

"Yea!" quickly answered Chenowith, and loudly, too.

"Sir!" came, in the most freezing tones of offended pride from Nell.

"Nay, Nell, he is right! And now in retaliation for my having done you this good turn you have climbed over the wall and stolen from my fold my pet ewe lamb?"

"Of that you may rest forever assured, Most Worshipful Knight!" piped a small voice with the silvery tones of a lark's song; and turning, behold Miss Dorothy, mincing and bridling, and displaying a courtesy which only Nell's can cap. Again she looked so witching that—

"By your leave, Lady Eleanor!" I cried, and kissed my dear Dorothy once more—and Absalom began to look as if he marveled at my greediness. And I marveled that he should marvel.

"Fie, Sir John," warned Nell; "if you must be ever kissing"—

"Kiss you?"

"Nay, I'll not permit it; but your son John should serve your turn as well as a pretty maid, methinks."



"Alas, for thy thinker, Nell. 'Tis rickety, and should be sent to the shop for repairs." Then turning to Dorothy I asked, sternly—

"So thou dost wish to marry this Welsh thief, my dear?"

"It is my purpose and intention to do so, Sir John."

"Your purpose and intention—then what has my permission been asked for?"

"Nay, sir, I asked it not; having secured my own I need no other."

"Not even Absalom's?"

"His, least of all."

And so it was arranged that they should be wed when John is christened, on Christmas Day. And it is a match that was made in Heaven.

At 5 of the clock on Christmas morning the trumpet sounded and the great guns at the four corners of our palisadoed square bellowed forth most awakeningly; and in a moment lights twinkled in every house, and from every abode came the happy shouts of children, rejoicing because of the discovery of treasures in their hung-up stockings. The air was cold, and yet mellowed as to its sharpness by that dampness which doth presage a snow-storm, the which was also foretold by the deep, soft glow of the mass of living coals from the over-night log left in the great fireplace in the hall. And there I sat, admiring the great, bright, clear eyes of my son John; impatient of the time when his little feet too, should be pattering to the chimney-shelf to claim his stocking, and his merry whoop should sound his delight at what the good Saint had brought him; and yet dreading any change that should make him different from the round, pink and white, roly-poly little man I held in my arms.

Promptly at 9 of the clock our people came trooping in to the worship of our God; filling the hall, which is of no mean size, and the adjoining rooms, save the Lady Eleanor's chamber. A rudely built pulpit stood midway



between the front doors and the fire-place at the back of the hall with a long bench from the guard-room set by way of rail in front of it; so that even if there was none of beauty in the furnishing there was good opportunity for all to hear.

The Rev. Mr. Tillottson was indeed a God's blessing to us all; for he ministered to us with loving fervency, treating in his discourse upon those essentials concerning which all righteous Christians (there be some who are unrighteous, if they *be* Christians) are in harmonious agreement; his text being from S. Luke, I, 78-79: "*The day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*" And from this he drew consolations and encouragement that were mightily comforting and strengthening to us all. The Psalms and hymns were sung to the good old tunes, so dear to us in earlier days; and in Betty's eyes were tears of joy as her full round tones swelled out to sustain Nell's true and pure soprano, leading in the praise of the One True God. Sweet and precious also, to me, were the readings and chantings of that dear old liturgy which hath been too readily and rashly condemned by many of God's over-zealous people.

There were some looks of surprise, as I could feel, when, in the Creed, Nell and Betty and I with it may be half a dozen others bowed our heads at the name of Jesus; but if any man desireth to demand of me anything in this regard, he shall not find me slow to answer him. I have never been in sympathy with those who have refused to bow simply because the papists do so; do they not likewise breathe, and shall we cease to use our lungs for that reason? To me, who will bow his head to no man save in loving courtesy, it seemeth the natural thing to do when the name of our Saviour is in my ears, especially when I am with God's people assembled and met together to worship Him. Where is the head that is held so high that it shall not bow in reverence at the mention of Him Who died a shameful death that we might be cleansed



from our sins and redeemed from the wrath of a justly offended God? If there be one in this world it is verily nowhere else than on a fool's shoulders.

And, truly, it was nothing less than a gracious blessing, that at the close of the service Mr. Tillottson proceeded to the administration of the blessed sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; and it was a joy to see that none of them there who professed and called themselves Christians remained away from the Lord's table.

After this there was the baptism of my son John, Absalom Chenowith, in his own right, Edward Taber (in the stead of and as proxy for Nell's brother Charles), and Elizabeth Baldwin, in her own right, appearing as sponsors. And so, with benediction, the services were ended.

Then there was a bustling migration of women-folk into my wife's chamber, while I took Chenowith (whose hand was cold and clammy) to an upper room, where we did put upon us our wedding garments. I was minded that there should be nothing left undone on my part to give distinction and peculiar honor to the occasion, for I sincerely believe that my dear Dorothy hath every virtue that can adorn the noblest woman, while in Dr. Chenowith I have found one having all the highest qualities of manhood.

I was, therefore, at pains to assume my bravest and most gallant apparel—such as would have been too fine for the church service. I wore my coat and breeches of red broad-cloth, my best embroidered waist-coat, a fine blue holland shirt, silk stockings of flesh color, with silver buttons and shoe-buckles, my best lace ruffles about my neck, and wrists and my biggest, finest wig. Nor was Dr. Chenowith behind me in the splendor of his appearance; for he brought forth a bridegroom's outfitting of the greatest elegance and taste. At last when we were ready and waiting for the signal I pledged the doughty little Welshman in a cup of my choicest brandy, bethinking me that he needed a stout heart on an occasion so trying.

You shall learn of your grandmother (for despite his



marvelous intelligence I doubt if my son John will remember many of the details of the affair) and of your grand-aunt Betty (an they so will) the details of the clothes in which they appeared. My dull wit hath never been able to grasp such high matters and retain them; only this I do know, leaving below a group of most soberly clothed people when we went up to dress, we found, on coming down (at 12 of the clock) a most brilliantly clad group awaiting us at my wife's chamber door. Even the Parson had an appearance much more gay and debonair than he showed an hour earlier.

My lieutenant, Edward Taber, in the full russet uniform of a Captain of the Ironsides, and looking every inch of him the gallantest soldier in the world (and truly he hath no superior) gave away the bride as was his duty and privilege; while Ruth, the mother, wept softly, in the which she was joined by the Lady Eleanor, Betty and every other woman present I do believe; though why they should have made their pretty noses red and spoiled their pretty complexions by doing so passeth my comprehension; nor have I been able to persuade either Nell or Betty to explain it to me; the only answer vouchsafed me being that men are stupid at the best; the which may be true—from their point of observation.

The first kiss from the bride was claimed and had by the Lord of the Manor as was most proper and right; the second the Parson took, over-ruling the bridegroom, partly by show of authority and somewhat by some clever circumvention.

The dinner was served at 2 of the clock, eighty persons sitting down to the first table; your grandmother being so far from me as she sat at the foot that she looked like a pink and gold cameo, cut clearly against the red glow of the fire at her back. The snow had set in to fall most heavily whereby the hall was so darkened that candles were called for, and they but added to the beauty of it all, their light being reflected from the silverware which, in honor of the wedding, the Lady Eleanor had brought forth to



the last piece, the great punch-bowl in the center; and it was a satisfaction to think that if my dear Dorothy had been married in England as the daughter of a great house, she could have had no finer furnishing to her wedding-feast, everything that found place on the snow-white damask being of the best.

The viands were most abundant and of the choicest; to show special honor to my dear Dorothy and the good Doctor, I had offered up a plump stout steer and a fine sheep which had fattened on the succulent grasses and the nourishing corn on the place, and England never saw a nobler loin of beef nor a finer haunch of mutton (both roasted on the spit before the great fire in the kitchen) than we had at our Christmas Day wedding dinner; to add to these were turkeys and fowls, saddles of venison, sound Yorkshire hams, ducks and oysters from the Potomac as well as fish of the most delicate flavor, with a plenty of the best Madeira to wash it down, unless punch, or good honest English ale, was preferred by any. To top off were rich cakes of various sorts, with preserves and sweetmeats from the old home, in the greatest profusion. Three times were the tables filled and cleared before all had partaken of our hospitality; and there was barely time to hustle all out of the way in time for the evening's pleasures.

The resources of Mountjoy Manor contain several excellent performers on fiddles, flutes, hautboys and recorders, and of a necessity we have fine drummers and trumpeters. These had been at practice together for a week or more, and they gave us such a flourish of harmony as we made formal entry for the opening minuet as must have astounded the echoes of this primitive wilderness. In the opening figure you may be sure your grandfather walked with the bride, while Dr. Chenowith went with the Lady Eleanor, the Parson with Madam Ruth, and Captain Taber with Betty. The Parson was a revelation for the graceful agility which he displayed as well he might be, having learned all his manners at the best school in Europe, which



is England; for I am not one of those who believe the French or the Spanish are our betters in anything.

After the dancing, glees, madrigals, and martial and tender ballads were mighty well sung by some mighty good voices; and, the bridegroom giving a Welsh love-song in most languishing fashion and with a most wondrous mastery of the knock-kneed and strangely twisted cockle-burr speech to which he was born, I was e'en compelled to warn Dorothy that she need never think to cope with the jaw that could do it without fracture. To the which she responded with the most perfect and serene confidence, that she trusted the Lord would strengthen her for whatever might be before her; and that she felt assured her trust would meet with all due response and fulfilment. Where hath my dear Dorothy got this conceit of herself, all of a sudden?

Following these things an hour was spent in singing the songs of Zion, the Psalms and hymns with which godly people praise the Father of all. In this enjoyment every one entered with sincere zest and the greatest pleasure; and, the music assisting, such a volume of melody from the majestical tunes to which those songs are set, went up, as filled the heart with so sweet a sense of solemn joy and thanksgiving as I hope I shall never forget; for it was most uplifting.

Indeed I was fain to sit apart for awhile; and, as I recounted the wonderful things that God had done for me and how that, especially during the past two or three years, He hath led me along a sure path in a dark and unknown land; and had brought me to a haven of Heavenly peace by most mysterious Providences, I was humbled at the knowledge of my own unworthiness, and at these manifestations of His great love; and my heart went up in a fervent prayer that He should keep me faithful.

At 11 of the clock I called for silence, thanked my company for the pleasure they had given me and mine and asked that Mr. Tillottson should dismiss us with a prayer for God's blessing on us all, and especially on the



child that day consecrated to Him, and on the newly wedded pair.

The which he did; and then, by the light of torches, and amid the shouting and cheering of all, the bride and groom were escorted by the whole company, through the deep snow, to their home in the doctor's roomy cabin.



## CHAPTER XLIII

### THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT ON THE MANOR

THE MANOR, 1st February, 1654.

THE subject of an orderly and formal method of government for those living on Mountjoy Manor hath much occupied my mind of late, and I have finally set up such a system as I hope and believe will answer all requirements, and preserve to every man his rights as a free Englishman; while it shall, at the same time, conduce to the prosperity as well as the protection of the community from the attacks of exterior enemies.

The command of our fighting forces shall be in Captain Edward Taber, under my direction.

To each man I shall allot, so soon as the time is ripe to go outside our compact formation, a certain specified and marked out piece of land, upon a lease or holding for twenty-one years, and at a merely nominal rental (as a bushel of corn in each year, or something of the sort); these holdings to be of ten acres for each single man or woman (she having a family dependent upon her, as a widow, or the like) and twice that for the married men. To these tenants I shall furnish, gratis, the tools with which to till the soil, as well as animals necessary upon such a place; and upon each holding a cabin of sufficient size shall be erected by the joint efforts of the tenants working together in mutual help as God hath intended that the children of men shall do.

The first great work however, shall be to construct a house to be dedicated to the worship of God, and a Manor House of suitable size and comfort. To this end I shall have the industry of brick-making entered upon this present year. And, so soon as I may, I shall fetch hither a proper man to minister to us in godly things.



It is my desire that my people shall be self-governing; wherefore I have adopted the system of Court leet, where all adult males of good character shall, each in equal weight, take part in the enactment of such local laws as may be necessary for us here; in the selection of persons to act as constables, bailiffs, etc.; and to try, in a fair just and impartial manner, any who may be accused of offense or crime against either person, property, or our community. Over this Court I shall myself preside.

To this I have added a Court baron; of which each tenant, no matter what may be the size and value of his holding, shall be a member; and of which the presiding officer shall be elected by the members, each having one vote and no more upon this or any other question. To this Court shall go all questions between myself and any of the people which may fail of other adjustment, and in it all actions for debt and the like, shall be brought.

I have promulgated this plan, and called for a preliminary meeting of the two Courts for the 15th inst. All seem satisfied with it; if there be any who are not I have not heard of them.



## CHAPTER XLIV

### THE GREAT HOUSE ON THE MANOR

MOUNTJOY MANOR, 4th May, 1656.

My brother John having gone at the head of his men to the relief of the people to the East of us who are threatened by the savages who but lately found the Manor, with him to command it, a nut too hard for them to crack, and as only God in His infinite wisdom knoweth whether he shall ever return to look again upon this book in which he hath so laboriously set forth for the benefit of his descendants some of the things that have happened to him and his, it seems to me, his sister, Elizabeth Baldwin, fitting that I should carry forward the story to the present day; lest if it be not done by me it shall never be done by any.

It was on the 27th of the last month (April) when Eli Hunt, who had been absent for some eight or nine weeks towards Jamestown as we had supposed but in fact away to the West, among and across the mountains, returned in haste and with a face filled with a most earnest look of anxiety, and demanded immediate audience with my brother. They retired to the chamber used by John for his private business consultations and were together upwards of an hour. Coming forth from the conference a servant was sent to bring hither Captain Taber, Dr. Chenowith, and one or two others; while Master Hunt, after eating like a starved hound threw himself upon the floor in the room that hath been set apart for him upstairs and at once fell asleep. It was plain that he had traveled long and toilsomely without halt for food or rest, to bring tidings.

An hour later (so prompt were the necessary measures taken) every man who had been at work in the fields outside our palisadoed defenses was brought in, or put to work gathering together the horses, cattle, sheep, swine



and fowls (which have been usually let to run free wherever they chose) in order that they might be housed in safety; while others were set at the task of strengthening our walls, moulding bullets, replenishing powder flasks, cleaning up the great guns and doing a multitude of other things which told of troublous times in prospect; and a few were armed and sent out in a Westwardly direction with careful instructions.

It was not until evening however, and after supper, that John found the time to explain to us fully what danger threatened us. We had lived so securely here with so little trouble from the Indians (the Doegs, our nearest neighbors and frequent friendly visitors, having always testified the sincerest loyalty to us) that the thought of danger from red men, which had at our first coming much occupied our minds had been lulled to sleep, if not almost forgotten; and it was like those awakened by a sudden alarm, from a pleasant and absorbing dream that we listened fearfully to the story of Master Hunt as recounted by John.

It should be said, first, that Master Hunt hath that devotion to the study of the habits, customs, traditions and speech of these red citizens of the wilderness, that other men have to the ways of birds, or butterflies or beasts, or bugs; and he hath learned much; and can pass safely among them when to another it would doubtless mean death to venture. He clothes himself chiefly in their apparel and hath adopted many of their customs, declaring that they are better than our own; and in no way have we ever been able to persuade him to sleep in a bed like the Christian which, despite all, he unquestionably is; though shy of speaking of it.

Going far to the West (so far that he had to cross, he says, a large and noble stream equal to any in the Colony in importance and yet having no ebb and flow of tide, of which he nor any one in Virginia had ever before heard) he came upon a tribe of Indians who also were new to him and heretofore unknown in the East. They call



themselves by a strange name which, spelt according to its pronunciation, is Ricahecrians, and told him in the sign language (which is common to all savages whatever may be their difference in speech) that they came from a country lying still further West; or, as they put it, toward the setting sun. He is familiar with the Algonquins of the various tribes; the Susquehannocks and those living in regions still further to the North; the Iroquois and Tuscaroras and Dakota or Sioux tribes, which lie south of the Potomac, extending to the East from a range of mountains some two or three hundred miles west of us, and thought there were none in all America of which he had not some knowledge, more or less; but of these he had no information whatever, before; from which fact he and my brother John have concluded that the distance to those Western shores to which Drake gave the name New Albion, must in fact be much greater than any have ever supposed—it may be many, many hundreds of miles from this region.

These Ricahecrians while they had no fire-arms or weapons of civilized warfare were still, he said, a most brave and valorous people; and showed such skill in the use of their bows, war-clubs and tomahawks as made them mighty formidable in appearance; and he was in great consternation at learning from them that they meditated a descent upon the settlements in this Colony, of which they had in some way learned. They talked (by signs, as I have said) most freely to Master Hunt; he having induced them to believe that he came from the North and knew nothing of the East. He was an object of much curiosity to some of them but not to all; for others gave him to know that they had seen men of white skins far off to the Northwest whom they at first thought to be gods; and one of them showed him a metal cross, with the effigy of the Crucified One carved thereon; which, he gathered, came from these whites. Who can they be? Not Englishmen, certainly, or we should know something of them. They may be—but there; of what use to idly reckon on these things when others more important are to be dealt with?



By some means these Ricahecrians had made up their minds that they should not only achieve great glory by attacking our settlements (for they have no other conception of glory than to fight, burn and slay) but acquire much spoil, such as the Indian heart doth set great store by. They numbered, he said, about one thousand warriors.

So soon as he could do so he made his escape and came hither to give the alarm.

To make all clear I must give some account of what hath been done here in the past two years; during which time John hath been too busy to write—besides he doth have a most unreasonable hatred for a pen albeit I am sure he useth one not ill when he is minded to take it up.

First, then, a house of worship hath been erected of bricks burned upon the Manor and sufficiently commodious and comfortable, where we have stated services (and have had since last September) conducted by the Rev. Hugh Newell, a most godly man, who being also a deeply learned in all useful knowledge doth maintain here a school during the week which, by the regulations adopted by the Court Leet under John's direction, all children between the ages of 5 and 14 are compelled to attend. The Reverend Mr. Newell came with Master Herring, in the *Lady Eleanor* in the latter part of June, last; and amply proved his manhood by valiant deeds in an action which the ship had with the free-booters, or "Brethren of the Coast" as they do call themselves (for whom, however, she and her crew were more than a match) on their way hither.

The lines of the palisade defenses have been greatly extended, as was made necessary by the increase of our numbers; and the cabins which at first clustered quite near to the Manor House have been removed further back; but still are they all within the defenses save the new cabin (that was) of Abijah Holcomb; the which after much ardent persuasion, he induced my brother to permit him to build a quarter of a mile to the south-west of the Manor House. The stables and open sheds wherein the stock may be sheltered and protected from an enemy attacking



us have also been greatly enlarged, as the increase in our live-stock made imperative. Two more pieces of artillery have been fetched over and properly mounted. The number of souls here has been added to by births and by the arrival of recruits from home until it is now near to three hundred; of whom one-half are males able to bear arms.

The burning of the brick was an experiment in which all took the deepest interest; and was a prodigious success. Practical brickmakers had been brought over, and with them to work and direct, the fall of 1654 and the following winter (which was open and favorable to the enterprise) were occupied by all who could be spared from other things in the production; with the result that a number sufficient for all present purposes have been made available.

The Manor House was begun early in the summer of last year, so soon as the little chapel was sufficiently advanced to be ready for the work of the finishing carpenters, and is now so nearly completed that we are living in it. It is seated to the south of the old house (which hath now become the kitchen and also furnishes quarters for the servants and some farm laborers without families who are exclusively employed in the concerns of the Lord of the Manor); and it fronteth toward the south, commanding from its elevation a most noble view of this most lovely valley.

The structure is of goodly proportions albeit even yet smaller than our dear old home at the Mere, having a frontage of 80 feet with a depth of 75, and is two stories in height with a large attic over the whole which may at any time be made into bed chambers. A cellar, 10 feet deep, and dry and cool, is under its entire extent. The foundations are of an excellent stone found here in abundance and the walls of the house have at the base a thickness of 3 feet, which at the top of the first story is brought down to 2 feet, and from the top of the second story to one and one-half, all most solidly and substantially laid. The roof, sloping back from the eaves 10 feet on each



side, then becomes flat; and is covered by a solid brick pavement, laid upon squared timbers amply supported by great beams and uprights within; at its edge it hath a parapet 3 feet high, of hewn oak logs, each 12 inches square and all firmly held together by iron bolts and in due time will be painted white; the which doth not only afford an admirable place from which the settlement may be defended but will give a most noble aspect to the building when all is complete.

Each door and window is equipped with shutters made of two thicknesses of 2-inch oak planking bound together by wrought spikes driven through and clinched and which may be secured on the inside by stout oaken bars; they are pierced at proper intervals, so that those within may fire upon their assailants; but, save for these small apertures (only large enough to admit the muzzle of the musket) they are surely impervious to bullets or anything save that which may be shot from the cannon's mouth. And with these shutters will every house or cabin that may be built outside the walls of the palisade be provided.

Within, the Manor House hath, first, a hall, two stories high and 20 feet in width, running the entire depth of the building; at the back or north end is a fire-place 10 feet wide and half as deep with a great chimney in harmony; on either side of the fire-place, beginning some 10 feet south of its opening, is a stairway of broad, low steps, reaching a platform which extends forth from the chimney-piece, giving access above to galleries or gangways with railings, from whence entrance is had, in turn, to the sleeping rooms in the second story; while the attic is reached by a broad stairway from the north end of the second story hall. On either side of the fire-place are doors opening on a roofed porch, 10 feet wide, which is connected also with the old house and leads to the kitchen; so that the food may be brought, all hot, into the great hall where of course we breakfast, dine and sup. The floors are of smoothed one-inch oak boards all through the house.



Entering the hall two noble and spacious chambers connected by large folding-doors, occupy all the eastern side, being each 30 feet wide, and 37 feet 6 inches in length; the north hath a fire-place in its east wall 5 feet in width, while the south hath a similar one on its west side where the chimney is constructed so as to give also an additional fire-place in the great hall. And in these chambers might a king hold his levees.

The south-west room, 25 feet square, is Nell's chamber, my brother's 16 x 25, and facing west, opening into it; there are two other rooms similar to his to the north of it, the one next adjoining his and with a connecting door being intended and used for his private business office, while that in the north-west corner will be used for a library-room.

The second floor is divided into bed-chambers, 8 in all, 4 on each side, and of uniform size; and in every room there is a fire-place and vast closets. The attic is one immense room, the which (the ceiling being no lower than in the chambers below) would make a queen's ball-room but for the great polished roof-beams; but will, when occasion requires, be cut up into chambers like those in the second story, the chimneys and windows being arranged so that this may be done, and thereby give to the then third-story rooms every comfort to be found in those of the other floors.

This is the house into which we came from the old scarcely three months ago. As I have said it is not yet finished. The doors, mantels, mirrors and carven-work for the railings around the hall galleries and other places, the wainscots and paneling, will come in the next cargo that shall be fetched by the *Lady Eleanor*; as will also the rest of the furniture. We have already, stored here, many leather-covered couches and chairs as well as those of Turkey work, an abundance of bed-room furniture, Spanish and Dutch tables, clocks, escritaires, screens, tapestries, and much plate, besides what we use. Still we have not enough to fully furnish the entire place, but shall have



when next our ship comes over. The Lady Eleanor hath also ordered a great addition to her already most abundant supply of fine table-linen and damask napkins and rugs and carpets to add to those we have, to make a home here in the wilderness of which no Englishman need be ashamed.

But here have I been led like the garrulous girl that I am away from the story I started out to write, to gossip about the house of which my dear brother is so vain; but which he alas! may never see again. God forgive me—I—but I hear my nephew John crying for his huge aunt! Another time to finish.



## CHAPTER XLV

### HE DEFEATETH THE RICAHECRIANS

MOUNTJOY MANOR, 1st July, 1656.

My sister Betty tells me that she began to write the story of our troubles with the Ricahecrian Indians but got no further than a description of the new Manor House, etc., before she was compelled to drop her quill to go to her nephew, John, Jr., his Worship having eaten something not good for his wholesome, and which gave him a pain in his inwards; and from that time on she was too busy to give the matter further attention. Wherefore, she saith, she hath left it to me to tell the tale.

Your great aunt Betty is, my dear grandchildren, a most excellent person (as the good God hath doubtless long since showed you); her chief weakness, drawback, and fault, being her sex. Truly it is not for me to judge in so serious a matter, but I may not forbear saying that here, as all the world can see, was a mighty good man spoiled when the material was used to produce a female. She hath not only the strength of a man in her nevertheless strictly feminine figure and mould—(for it is a marvel that in her arms is almost as much power as mine; and yet, if they are massive, they are as round and soft and plump, and as white-skinned as those of a girl who will run from a cow and cannot lift a pound)—but also, despite her charm of womanly tenderness hath she the courage of the best man that ever walked the earth. She hath a man's quick wit and self-reliant resourcefulness albeit she will cry at a marriage or go crazy over a new-born babe with the rest of her sex. No man may hope to daunt or frighten her nor brow-beat; she will face him out and drive him forth of her presence cowed and humbled I



care not how great a bully he may be; but she hath all the modest demeanor and most delicate and sensitive refinement that belong to the daughters who dwell in king's houses. She can enter into the high matters of Church and statesmanship with the ablest of them all and hath powers of perception and logical deduction, aye, of military leadership and strategy, that would make the fortune of a king's counselor or a general in the field; but at the same time she can tell you to a riband every detail in the dress of a woman upon whom she hath looked for no longer than sixty seconds.

And so when she started in to inform you of our recent affair with the savages, she must needs begin with an elaborate description (for so I assume it is, not being inclined to wade through the long screed, which she assures me contains nothing else) of the new house; just as she shall first tell you what comprised the attire of the woman before telling you what message she brings howsoever important that message may be. And when I asked her why she should take such trouble to describe that with which you, while reading this, are of course more familiar than is she at this moment, she replied that the picture must have its setting or lose its significance; that to enable you to understand what your grandfather did and the true meaning of it you must know by what he was surrounded; and so forth.

"For, dear John," she said, "this house may not last forever."

"Nor need it, to be the home of my grand-children, who like you and me, my dear Betty, shall have here no continuing city, but shall seek and find one to come."

"Nay, but it may not last till they are born, even."

"Then why should they know what they shall have missed? But that is folly—for what shall prevent or hinder me from rebuilding, if by any chance it should be destroyed—nay, this is even greater folly, for who shall destroy it?"

"The Indians might"—



"They shall be better than any I have yet seen, an they do."

"You have not seen all of them yet. But are they the only enemies you must be on your guard against, John?"

"What others shall there be?"

"An if King Charles II shall come into his own?" for these women, true and loyal in all things though they be, have ever a weakness for the poor Prince; and I do verily believe that in their own hearts they are ready to welcome him back.

"I know of no such king, Betty; but if there be one such and he do come into his own again how shall it concern me? In what way shall it affect the Manor House at Mountjoy?"

"Have you not been in arms against the House of Stuart?"

"Aye, that have I, and right well do they know it."

"Do you think this hath made them love you?"

"Nay, I know not how that may be; but I do assure you they and theirs have found it well to show a mighty civil respect for me, more than once."

"Now you are boasting John and it ill-becometh you."

"Verily, thou speakest truly, Elizabeth. 'Twas a silly boy's boast. I thank thee for the reproof. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, Betty, and thou hast ever been my true friend. The glory belongs to our God."

"And how unerringly He always chooseth His instruments. Thou wert indeed a weapon fitted to His hand. O, to be the sister of such a brother. Surely God hath blessed me far beyond my deserts!"

"How true, how very true, my dear Betty! But this shall not be made a matter of outward reproach to thee if thou wilt but show, as now, a seemly appreciation of my merits and thine own unworthiness."

At the which her Ladyship first frowned, stamping her foot, and then, failing to reach my ear (which experience hath taught me to guard when she is by) she burst out laughing.



"Oh, John! You make me almost as great a fool as you are, yourself."

"It is a sin to ascribe to man the stupendous works which Omnipotence alone is able to perform. But what if this Kinglet of whom thou talkest, doth not love me?"

"Only this, my dear brother; and it is a thing you think too little of I do believe. The present state of affairs shall not last forever in England. The idea of a king at the head of the government is so ingrained in English hearts that they will never be content to be ruled without one. The novelty of the change they now have being worn off, the hearts of the people will turn back with yearning to the King. And when he cometh into his own again think you he shall not be revenged upon his enemies?"

"But I am far from him and doing him no harm here."

"But the King hath a memory and a long arm and it may reach you even here, through those he shall send to rule over us."

"Hath the King an arm like God, Betty? And hath not He brought us here, the Lord God of Hosts, by most mysterious ways, and set us up here in the wilderness? Hath He done this, hath He gone so far, and shall He not go farther? Can He not protect us in what He hath bestowed upon us? Is His hand shortened? Nay, that which He hath planted shall grow. Hither hath He brought me and here shall I remain, and my children, and my children's children after me; they shall spread to the East and to the West, to the North and to the South, for He shall make of them a mighty nation, but ever shall this be their home, their Jerusalem, towards which they shall turn when they pray. Never fear! I shall take care of my own though all the kings and princes of Christendom rise up against me."

"But do not men sometimes overthrow God's purposes?"

"Aye, they may do so at such time as careless watchmen are on the towers and a weak-hearted feeble-headed one hath charge of His matters. But have no doubts



as to the outcome here at Mountjoy—I am in charge here, and it shall joy me to see the emissaries of the Evil One essay to oppose His purposes so far as they may have been confided to the hands of His servant, John Baldwin; for truly I shall chasten them righteously and then, turning them with godly persuasion to the true way I shall take care that they seek peace and ensue it. As for the governor any king of England may send hither I give myself small concern; let him be diligent in his office and meddle not with the affairs of others. If he show himself too curious with mine, why then he shall be taught his place. God brought me here and I'll permit no man to exercise his will over me; for to do so would be to fail of the work whereunto I am fetched here."

Now all this grew out of that peculiar feminine quality which hath made Betty to worry and fret over doubts and fears as to a future which God hath already clearly provided and ordained.

And now that I have got to it, there is but little to tell of the trouble with the Ricahecrians—not much more than that they learned, after a most severe disciplining, that they must not again intermeddle with affairs hereabouts which do not concern them; nor are they likely to ever forget the lesson, for it was taught to them most soundly and completely.

After Eli Hunt had recruited his strength with food and sleep he went on, as was his wish and mine, to warn our kindred to the East of the coming of the savages. My outposts were sent to the foot of the mountain and beyond his nose to the north; and on the 29th April they hurried back word that the Indians were coming about a thousand strong in all their war-paint, shouting their war-whoops singing their songs and dancing their war-dances.

So soon as this news came I took with me one hundred of my people, leaving fifty or near that many to guard Mountjoy, and went forth to meet the enemy. About three miles from the Manor I placed my men in position



by which they should not only be squarely across the front of the advance of the red men, but also might enfilade them on their right flank, with their musketry fire.

The methods of Indians in fighting as they had been taught us by Eli Hunt are very different from those we had been used to, and yet are founded upon the soundest principles, and my men had well learned the lessons Hunt and I had taught them. Here is no such thing as marching in solid mass to hurl yourselves upon your enemy and break and crush him by the sheer weight of your force. Indeed, to try to do so would be but to expose yourselves to almost certain destruction by your opposers, who, sheltered and protected by the trees of the forest, do their deadly work with ease and great safety. And so we met them in their own way and every man fought behind a tree.

With the wariness of such a foe it was for the most part a matter of waiting and watching for a target; but, with patience, that will ever come, and so did. Nor did we find that the Indians, armed with bows, were an enemy to be despised, for they have a skill in marksmanship like unto that of England's ancient bowmen and they send their flint-headed arrows with as much closeness of aim as one may have with a musket and such force as to cleave a man's skull. And in this way lost we three men, good and true; and had five others wounded but not desperately; I myself coming off as is my habit with a scratch or two.

We came never to close quarters with them all the long day that we fought; and at evening I brought my men inside the defenses with our dead leaving only a band of sentinels without; these dead we buried that night by the light of torches, the Rev. Mr. Newell performing the religious rites. When we went forth again at dawn the next day the enemy had disappeared; and we counted upwards of one hundred and fifty of his killed in the woods and buried them.

They had disappeared so completely and entirely that we made sure they had gone back to the West, but on



the evening of the 2d of May came a runner from the Doegs appealing for help and saying that the strange Indians, making a detour from here to the South and then to the North-East were now threatening them and with them the white settlers. I at once chose seventy-five of my people and set out in pursuit, leaving Captain Taber behind with the rest of our fighting force to defend Mountjoy if it should be attacked.

For four days we marched forward meeting none of the foe; on the fifth a party of Doegs joined us bringing sad tidings of massacres among both their own people and the whites; of burned homes and outraged women, slain children and slaughtered cattle. The Doegs seemed filled with fear and consternation; but I encouraged them as best I could and on the morning of the next day I had upwards of a hundred of them with me. I then proposed that if they and their brethren would join me I would lead the combined force against the common enemy. To this they joyfully acceded, sending runners to apprise their tribe of points at which they might meet us as we pressed forward; and twenty-four hours later I found myself commanding a body comprising about three hundred Doegs and my seventy-five whites. I divided the Doegs into three companies placing an experienced white soldier in command of each.

With these I continued to chase as rapidly as I might, being guided at times by the trail left of destroyed settlements and murdered men, women and children, and again, detained, losing our way and baffled thereby for sometimes a day or so at a time. Nor was it till the 20th May that we began to get hot upon the scent, and had scarce done so when we learned that the enemy, having gone as far as the falls of the James River had crowned his bloody foray by defeating an army of whites under a General Hill and the Chief Totapotamey, in a most bloody affray in the which Totapotamey and many of our and his people were slain, and had turned about and was returning towards the West.



My heart burned within me and the Doegs were wild with a desire for revenge. I sought, first, a secluded spot where on my knees I prayed that the Lord God Jehovah Whose battles I had beforetime fought, would now come to our help and give into the hands of his servant these bloody and ruthless murderers. I then chose me good men from among the Doegs to go forward to observe and report upon the movements of the Ricahecrians; and this work did they perform with such fidelity and speed that in three days more the outlaws were, as I had asked, delivered into my hands albeit they then knew it not; for they were drunk with their triumph and careless in their wild, jubilant, return journey.

On the morning of the 25th May we struck them; and although they were taken utterly by surprise they gave us a shrewd, hard fight. But by the grace of the God of Battles who was with us we withstood them that day, and having prevented their escape that night (a lesson I had learned by my previous experience with them at the affair near the Manor) on the 26th we completed our work; nor do I believe that of all their number more than a score of them escaped if any did.\*

Of the Doegs I lost over one hundred and ten of my own good men found graves in the wilderness, so far from the homes they had left with me when we followed God's leading to this new land. It was a thought that saddened me grievously. Four of them had wives and families at the Manor, one was a childless widower; two were about to marry, and three were bright young lads the oldest but sixteen.

May He without Whose permission not even a sparrow falleth to the ground and Whose providences are past finding out by mortal wit bring out of this dispensation that which shall fully compensate. And He will, for He doeth all things well.

We retraced our steps as rapidly as possible, our hearts

\* This was the first and only appearance of the Ricahecrians in history. They were never heard of afterwards.—*Editor*.



full of anxiety for the fate of those we left behind us. The way was long and toilsome but we passed over it with eagerness, and fell on our knees with praise and thanksgiving when, at last, we came in view of the dear spot once more, and saw it unharmed, and with the grand old buff-and-Bible standard waving over its walls.

The whole population, headed by my sister Betty carrying in her arms a bundle in white, poured forth to meet us; and as the echoes rang with sturdy cheers and shouts of joy, I, on my knees, gave my first kiss to my first daughter. Then, handing back the child to my sister, I flew to embrace my dear.

Born on the 1st day of June, A. D. 1656, at four of the clock in the afternoon, at Mountjoy Manor, unto John Baldwin, Knt., and Eleanor Hedges Baldwin, his wife, a daughter; weighing nine pounds; and she shall be called Eleanor.

May God make me worthy of His loving kindness towards me. Amen.

JOHN BALDWIN.



## CHAPTER XLVI

### HE DEALETH RIGHTEOUSLY WITH THE FROWARD

THE MANOR, 10th February, 1657.

THERE hath been here at Mountjoy a house-cleaning, as it were; at all events the place hath been purified of certain foul conditions and set in order, and certain points have been settled and established in a way that, I suspect, hath not been pleasing to some; but I have a lively hope (and ground for it) that these shall henceforth bear about with them their discontent in their own bosoms, nursing it as a private luxury. If they do not another lesson shall be taught them, which I am determined shall once for all suffice.

Master Job Herring arrived on the 6th of July last in the staunch *Lady Eleanor*, bringing with him (besides the finishings for the Manor House, and a cargo of assorted commodities) some ninety-two recruits for our little Colony. I had desired to so increase our numbers as to make safe the enlargement of the liberties and comforts of the people by giving to each family its home-place, without the defenses. And this is now going on when the weather permits—the which however hath been much against us so far, but we have been diligent as might be and only twenty families remain within the palisade. These we hope to have housed in their own cabins outside before the autumn comes on us.

The defenses will still stand as a strong place whereunto all shall resort in event of an attack at any time by any large force. To insure their being able to do so none have been permitted to go further, in his selection of a home-site, than a mile from the Manor House; while those nearest are only one-fourth that distance therefrom; and all hath been so arranged that an equal number of these homes



are set on each of the four sides of the great house, which is the heart of all.

There could be no more favorable place for the carrying out of such a plan, the advantages on each side being equal to those on any other and there being nothing to prefer in the way of soil, water, timber, drainage, etc.; so that one might make his choice with his eyes shut and neither lose nor gain by doing so. And for each family is constructed a sound and stable cabin of good hewn timbers with cellar and level floors of split oak planks smoothed with draw-knife and adze, with tight seams and joints; each cabin having the number of rooms needed to house the family with comfort and a strong if rough stable and out-houses; to each cabin I allow at least two glass-windows; the others being of deer-skin, finished (for we have three excellent master tanners with us) as is the skin on the head of a drum, till more glass may be brought over; and to each house there is a good brick chimney in which two or even four fire-places may be put, and never less than two. And to each house-holder I have made the allotment of land, tools, animals and so forth, as I originally provided.

In making my requisition upon Master Herring for my recruits I bade him fetch this time only a few farmers, as we have enough of these at present, but to supply our needs more fully with blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, tanners and curriers, brewers, spinners and weavers and the like; and of the sixty males who came in July forty were of these different sorts of craftsmen; it follows of course that the most of them are from London; and for the most part they are very good workmen though not so steady in their habits as my good old Ironsides comrades.

Now I know not why it should be so but I have learned that altho' all may profess the same religion and be seemingly inspired with the same desire and determination to have and hold to their enjoyment all the rights of worship and of civil liberty that belong to enlightened and free men yet there are differences (apparently ingrained in their



very natures) in their views, which are so great as to give them the aspect of being utterly at odds with each other, and almost without common ground of agreement. So that your craftsman in the town is a more restless fellow, more easily and quickly made dissatisfied, than his brother in the country who takes more deliberation before he makes up his mind, even if he do reach the same conclusion in the main. But when your clod-hopper hath finally put his grievance into form he ever seems to hold it more reasonably and clearly defined than doth he of the town, and more free from accompanying errors and whimsies; and while each will fight for what he holdeth to be his right, the country-man will fight longer and the more patiently that he hath no false issue mixed up with the true one. The better and clearer judgment and the more godly self-control and withal the higher type of manliness is with the country dweller; and even if he be slower to move he is ever the more fixed and firm in his determination.

There was that in the appearance of our London recruits that was not altogether pleasing to me; for they seemed a sort of loose fish (not all indeed, but some), with, I thought, a cunning and crafty speculation in their eyes the which were not so steady to the front nor so honest in their glance as those of my good yeomen already here. Nor was I better liked with the look of some of their women, who had not that staid and matronly demeanor I would see in all of that sex. There was, to some of both men and women, that readiness and freedom in manner and glibness in speech which it may be, doth more naturally belong to people town-born and bred; but which hath never been a recommendation in the eyes of those who have always lived in rural parts.

Nevertheless, despite my secret apprehensions and mislikings (the which I took pains to betray to none), I joined with all here in making the newcomers welcome, and on Master Herring's assurance that he had exercised the greatest caution in their selection and as each bore letters from ministers and preachers setting forth their godliness and



zeal as members of the Saving Remnant I was fain to hope that my doubts and suspicions were ill-founded, and indeed, proceeded perhaps, more from an inward disorder that might have seized upon me without my perceiving it than from aught else; and I therefore procured an electuary from Dr. Chenowith (albeit he said I needed it no more than the man in the moon), and took it; whereby I was made very sick for a whole day. And yet was I not purged of that which had made me uneasy.

The Reverend Master Hugh Newell, it should be explained, is a most godly man, of about fifty years, of a sweet and gentle disposition and most benevolent in aspect and life, but a very lion in defense of what he holdeth worth fighting for, while with a saving charity for the honestly held errors of others he can be also a consuming scourge upon those who do with malice prepense and aforethought follow after (and seduce others into the same sinful ways) that which is evil. For he doth hold that as the Great Enemy of Souls is a being of most astute parts and plausible cunning there is no doubt (nor can there be), that he hath been and ever shall be (till he hath been again returned to his chains, which may God grant shall be right speedily), able so completely to deceive and win over some who would otherwise be acceptable servants of God, persons of great intellectual endowments and noble faculties, as that they deliberately and freely choose their fatherhood and kingship in him, the said Satan; that our warfare should therefore be directed no less against them as his tangible and most dangerous agents than against that intangible and most elusive personality which is the Principle of Evil himself. And in this doth Master Newell most warmly and heartily commend himself to me; and it shall go hard with us if we, united and determined, do not make this place too hot for even the Devil himself; the which is a prodigious undertaking, but by God's grace we'll e'en do it.

Master Newell is an ordained presbyter of the old church. His family is of the best of the gentry of Scotland, coming



to England with James. In England Master Newell was most carefully educated at Cambridge, taking his orders in 1630, and holding a living for some years in Devonshire. As the troubles growing out of the late King's usurpations and the Queen's papish conspiracies swelled and gathered force, the love of true godliness and of the liberties of the people grew and increased in Master Newell, and, to make a long story short, he made choice and took his stand with God's people, and served as a Chaplain with my Lord Essex and after with Fairfax and others. He came hither hoping to establish a school for the teaching of the higher branches of knowledge in the Colony; and his coming with Master Herring to Mountjoy Manor was truly a blessing direct from the hand of my God; for here he shall remain so long as I can persuade him to do so; and indeed he seemeth fairly content with us.

Yet hath not Master Newell lost all his love and reverence for the old Church; all that was godly and righteous he doth adhere to; the errors into which Laud and his evil counsellors sought to lead her he doth detest with a righteous abhorrence. He hath avoided the extremity of fanaticism into which many of the Remnant have been led (I grieve to say it), and doth ever foster a lively hope that the day shall come when the doors of the Church shall be opened that all her children may return to her; and I am not ashamed to go with him in this, albeit I once thought I should never be of such a mind. Time and reflection in the past four years have presented many things to me in a light more correct than that in which I regarded them during the hot days of my youth and our fighting.

To Nell especially, and to my sister Betty, too, hath Master Newell been a gracious blessing sent by God; for neither of them have ever been able to worship Him with thankful and happy hearts under the ministrations of our unordained thumpers of theology. The little Eleanor was duly christened by Master Newell as one upon whom the consecrating hands had been laid; and so long at least



as we go on adding to the House of Baldwin in the Wilderness (which I hope shall continue for many years), so long must Master Newell be with us to start the youngsters fairly on the voyage of life.

Now the first open signs of trouble we had displayed by our newcomers from London were observed within three months of their landing; but were passed by for some time without remark in the hope that they might presently disappear. They showed themselves in the services of worship in our little Chapel to which we have given the name of Trinity. At first the room was simply fitted up with pews of rough planking, a raised platform on which was a small table and a chair for the leader or preacher. After Master Newell came however, he and Nell and Betty set about making it more churchlike. They caused it to be fitted up with a Lord's Table, rails, a reading-desk, a prayer-stool, a pulpit and so forth, the services were conducted after the old forms. To this no one made objection especially as Master Newell's sermons were filled with the true spirit of fervent godliness and he countenanced nothing savoring in the least of papistical practice either in observances or doctrine.

So that as true Independents we have set up that form of worship that it pleases us to have; the which is that of the Old Church; and with it have the right doctrine which with all her errors hath ever been with the Church (even as the oracles of God were with the Jews in their errors till the coming of Our Lord in the working-out of God's purposes removed their candle-stick out of his place), and for the preserving of which may Heaven's blessing ever be with the Church. And all our people here though many were at first disturbed in their ignorance as to what might come of it, received the new methods of procedure with quick hearts, and have learned to rejoice that the change hath come to us.

For a time the Londoners made no sign of dissatisfaction with these things, but all attended willingly and regularly; (for I will have no one remain at home who is able to go



to the Chapel, so long as I am master here) but trouble came at last, suddenly and without warning. It seemed to be borne in upon certain of these elect that grievous wrongs were being done in the services, against God's true religion. This they gave evidence of in various ways during the services; not only in failing to bow at the name of Jesus (which none here is required to but all do through natural reverence, since they have learned that there is in it no papistry but only a recognition of the Divinity of the Lowly Nazarene; and which the newcomers did at their first coming, in, as it soon appeared, a merely servile imitation of the rest of us), but casting upon those who did glances of sour contempt and scorn; refusing to kneel while the prayers were being read, as if to assert their independence of Almighty God; keeping their seats while the Creed was being recited and the Psalms and hymns were being sung; and showing during the sermon a most irreverent spirit of inattention, as if they were so superior in their natures that the expounding of God's Word was a matter of no importance to them; and, finally, making a habit and practice of leaving the Chapel with noisy commotion while the minister was pronouncing the benediction as if they needed no blessing or help from God.

All these things came gradually and as they were not remarked upon nor reprov'd in the beginning the perpetrators grew only bolder, proceeding from one extreme to another until our Christian forbearance was strained to almost the last tension. But still did we bear with them; daily asking the mercy of God for them that they might be brought to better minds, and that we might be given grace to keep our hands off them. And so matters ran in this regard till late in October.

Meantime there came to my ears from time to time rumors of an attempt at the cultivation by these same men of a spirit of disloyalty and insubordination among my people; albeit they were mightily civil and respectful in my presence everywhere, save in the Chapel. It was told to me that secret meetings were being held at night by



the conspirators, at which they discussed what they were pleased to term their "grievances"; and to these meetings they sought to draw some of my old and tried comrades and retainers and some did draw but not many, and those thus seduced by them are now mighty sorry, and are bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Their "grievances," forsooth, consisted, as they put them, in complaints that I am too much a master; that I tyrannize over the people here gathered together; that I am not only a law unto myself but have also imposed my will as law upon all at Mountjoy; that this should not be borne by free Englishmen and that they ought to rise and depose me and set up a ruler chosen of themselves, sending me back to England and taking my possessions unto themselves to be used for the common good of all here; and more to the same effect; the which was of course rank mutiny.

But I had that perfect confidence in my people that for a time I forbore to molest them in any way, going about my business with no appearance of knowledge of what they were plotting and scheming and making no difference in my treatment of them and the others. I was often urged by Captain Taber who kept a sharp eye on them, to let him settle the matter; which he said he could speedily do with no more loss than one, or possibly two, of the ring-leaders, who should never in any case fulfil their highest and noblest mission till they had yielded up the ghost and their bodies had resolved into their original constituents whereby the earth might be manured and enriched and made more fertile through the wonderful power of God to utilize the basest materials for good purposes. But I restrained him, bidding him the rather to pray for them that God might give the poor deluded creatures the sense to see and abjure their errors.

"But," he cried; "the age of miracles is past, Sir John."

"Nay, Ned; for shame! Who hath shortened God's arm? If our dear Lord was willing to suffer a shameful death upon the Cross to save these vile creatures may we not be patient and bide His time? Shall we take



it upon ourselves to defeat His mercy by putting them forthwith beyond the reach of it?"

"'Tis they who have put themselves there. Moreover it were a sad waste of good mercy to spend it upon these scurvy fellows."

And as he was thus incorrigible in my hands I sent him to Master Newell for a godly admonition. For a long time none beside myself save the Captain, Master Newell and Dr. Chenowith knew of these things.

At last however, one day in October, a shrill outcry from one of the cabins where a family of the newcomers from London was lodged drew my attention; and going thither I found a pretty state of affairs. The occupant was known as Oliver Worseley, and his supposed wife went by the name of Lavinia. They were the worst in looks of all the Londoners; but, save that I knew Worseley to be the chief conspirator among the mutineers (as he was likewise the leader in bad behavior in Chapel), we had nothing tangible against them.

Worseley was a most unhandsome wretch, with that about him so suggestive of somebody or something I had once seen that, failing to place him, it annoyed me. I could not identify him, and yet it seemed that I ought to do so; until at last I concluded that I must have looked on a face like his in some hideous nightmare, it may have been when distraught with my wounds; for surely in my sane senses I could never have imagined that even the hand of Satan could have done so evil and ugly a piece of work; and so I let it out of my thoughts. He wore a great wig of flowing and nauseously greasy ringlets covering his ears and hanging to his shoulders; a dirty patch concealed his left eye and his right was red and truculent; he had a scar across his face cutting through the bone of his nose and twisting it into more ugliness than it could possibly have had before; another creased and crinkled scar ran across his throat. He boasted that he had lost his eye by a pike-thrust at Naseby; that he got the cut over the nose in leading a charge against Rupert



at Marston Moor; while it was to a Scotchman, who at Dunbar, tried to saw his head off with a dull claymore, that he owed the scar on his throat. He had a voice like a bull's bellow and was so stuffed with Scripture texts that they rolled forth from him in an irrepressible stream so that when at the impromptu prayer-meetings he used to lead, he besieged, or pretended he did, the Throne of Grace. He was a fairly good shoemaker; but ever meddled with ale save when he could get something more fiery which was not often under my regulations. And yet, with all these things, he wielded a sort of a power and influence over some of the men, having, as we found afterwards, some twenty at his back. He was, it may be, five and forty years of age though no one but his father, the Devil, could have sworn to that—and his oath is not good in Christian courts; as for his dam, God forbid that any woman should have given him birth.

The woman Lavinia, was a haggard and worn creature, and yet with a strange and ill-fitting smartness about her, which, it seems, had something of attraction for the young and unwary. She may have been of pleasing aspect once; indeed there was often suggestion of it in her face, as there was, at times, in her port and carriage, of one who had once lived in good station, the which she seemed ever on guard against showing. In her speech, when she forgot herself, she showed that she had received some education; but how much it was hard to say for in this she seemed again on her guard. At their first coming she claimed to be a seamstress, and in that capacity Nell and Betty had her employed for a short time, and thus I came to see something of her. But she reminded me so strongly of the poor outcast creatures I had seen in the London streets in the days of my youth that I was glad when they sent her back to her cabin.

When the outcry took me to their door I found Worseley standing in it. He had surely been drinking and was scowling, his red face an inhuman mask of malignant virulence. There was sound of smothered wailing within



as of a woman weeping and yet striving to choke it down.

"What has happened, Worseley?" I asked civilly.

"Nothing in which you are concerned," he answered surlily.

"And who made you the judge of what concerns me?" I was instantly hot. "What means this sound of wailing? Is your wife in pain—hath anything happened?"

He coolly set his heavy shoulder against the jamb and threw his form across the door.

"And what if she be in pain? And what if something hath happened?" he asked, wagging his head viciously. "What have you to do with it?"

"Stand aside, and let me pass within."

"Nay, you will not pass! This is my house, and the house of an Englishman is his castle! I forbid your entrance into my house. You shall not lord it over me, as you do over these poor snivelling fools here!"

I would have no trouble with him nor did I wish to foul my hands by touching him, and the Lord having sent Abijah Holcomb to the scene I merely signed him with my head; and Abijah's big bony hand caught the ruffian's throat, there was a twist of an iron wrist and Worseley lay on the ground ten feet from the door; and my way was clear.

The furniture within the room was scattered about, upset and disordered, as if there had been a struggle there. The woman, bent over a tub of water was washing blood from her face; her eyes were surrounded by great patches of discolored skin, her nose seemed to be crushed flat, her lips were cut and bleeding, and on the floor lay two or three teeth which she had spat out.

"What hath happened here?"

"Naught hath happened, your Worship, save that I have had a vertigo and stumbled over a chair to the floor and struck and bruised my face."

Doth a woman ever sink so low that she loses the power to love somebody or something or that she will not lie to shield him whom she loves?



"Nay, try not to deceive me Lavinia; I am too much used to the marks left by a man's fist not to know them when I see them. That brute hath beaten you."

"Sure, then," she cried, shrilly, "he is no more a brute than are you, with all your grand airs and masterful ways. He is as good a man as you are and I'll not have you libel him to my very face."

"But he hath beaten you."

"And what if he hath?" and her voice grew still more shrill and scornful. "What if he hath? What is it your business? Hath not a husband the right to beat his wife? Nay, doth not the Apostle himself declare that a wife shall be obedient to her husband? I was disobedient, and he had full right for what hath done. As for you, meddle with your own affairs and leave ours where they belong."

The poor creature spluttered and wept and mumbled and shrieked. She had been shamefully, brutally punished.

Glancing to the door I saw Worseley standing, scowling, with Abijah behind him slowly and wistfully drawing his short black cart-whip through his hand, looking inquiringly at me. But I could give the work to no one else. It was a dirty job but dirty jobs must sometimes be done by even the best of us. At a stride I was out of the door and with one hand I caught the brute by the collar and with the other grasped the whip.

"You coward! A wife beater," I cried, beside myself with rage. "For every blow you gave her I'll take a heavy reckoning from your hide."

And the brave whip sang and whistled right merrily as I laid on with such good will that it seemed as if I could feel the weapon sink into his flesh with each blow. And the pleasure of it! There was such a relish of satisfaction went with the work I was doing as I hope I shall never lose the enjoyment of.

And Master Worseley writhed and squirmed and groaned and at last he howled; while Abijah stood by beaming placidly till with a scream of anger the woman leaped from the door and plunged at me with an axe whirling about



her head and the look of a she-devil in her eyes; then Abijah caught, disarmed and held her. But he could not hold her mouth, from which poured forth so vile a stream of filthy abuse as never in all my wide experience had I heard from human lips before.

"I'll teach you to beat your wife," I said.

"Hold," cried Worseley, choking and gasping; "she's no wife of mine! She is but a common London —— and ought to be scourged forth of the camp. Indeed, sir, she is not my wife; and I was right to beat her; for she is a vile creature."

My arm fell to my side and my soul was filled with an inexpressible loathing; and a fear as well. I loathed the coward who to save his own skin could stoop to so defame the woman who was even then straining every muscle to escape Abijah's stern clasp that she might go to his rescue. He would consign her to any infamy, degradation and suffering, to save himself; she would dare and endure anything to spare him. Surely, an ordinary punishment would not be great enough for him; I must take time to think and to devise something that might fit his deserts.

But what if his charge were true? What if she were not his wife? What was this we had fetched into the purity of the godly life of our Colony? If these were not married were the others?

"I have sinned, your Worship," whined Worseley, wriggling painfully, for his stripes were doubtless burning hot. "I have sinned, but I do repent. Never again shall I consort with the vile strumpet."

That God should permit such a creature to live!

Turning to the woman I asked if this was true; whether Worseley were her husband or no.

"He is all the husband I want," she replied, sullenly.

"Have you a marriage certificate?"

"Nay, but we are man and wife in the sight of God. He hath told me so himself, and he knows for he is a preacher —aye, and a better than yon mealy-mouthed papist, Newell. 'Twas all agreed before we left London, and he promised



if I would come with him as his wife he would make a decent woman of me. Aye, and there be others here, in the same plight."

Bidding Abijah deliver Worseley to the constable for safekeeping in our tight log gaol (for which so far we had no use), and to keep an eye on the woman, I went to the Manor House; and going to my room with a sickened heart laid the whole matter before the Lord God, beseeching Him that He should send me wisdom and guidance in this crisis in our affairs. For the greater part of the day I sat there and refused to see or talk with any, while I thought of what I should do.

This pollution must be cleansed; this festering sore must be healed ere it should poison all our blood. But how?

They could not be returned to England under several months for the *Lady Eleanor* is not due on her return voyage till May or June, and this, remember, was last October. I could not drive them forth into the wilderness; the winter was rapidly coming on and all signs pointed to a very hard and severe one; they would perish. Humanity forbade their banishment.

What was my duty as a Christian? These were most depraved, debauched and besotted sinners. They were living in a way abhorrent to all godly views of life. If they remained they might work irreparable injury to the morals and well-being of our community, especially among the young. To keep them would be to harbor a nest of vipers in the sacred places of our homes where all, and our guileless youth most of all should be in danger of being stung to the death that hath no end. And yet they could not be driven out.

Then did I truly feel as I never felt before, the weight of the responsibility that I had so easily assumed. It almost crushed me; and again I prayed and told my God that the matter was too great for me.

And even while I prayed the thought flashed and burned through my heart and soul—"For whom did Christ die? To save whom? The sinners, or the righteous? Those



only who live decent lives or as well those sunk in the deepest depths of vilest sin? And as His servant vowed and pledged to labor with absolute devotion in the cause which that Christ consecrated with His blood can I hesitate? Am I to pick and choose among those needing salvation? Is not my obligation as imperative in the case of the vilest offender as in that of one who hath not gone so far astray? Am I not under bonds to Christ to try to bring the basest and meanest as well as to others, to His redemption? If these are sent away or even in any manner separated from our godly people here are we doing our duty by them? They must be saved, and by my own will must I make the effort, looking for God's direction and His blessing."

And I felt that the thought was sent from God.

I rose from my knees and at once sent forth a summons that all those who came to us in July should meet me in the Chapel in the evening, bringing with them their marriage certificates; and, calling for Captain Taber, I gave direction to so place his men that none should escape. Besides these I summoned also Master Newell and Absalom Chenowith—and then did I recall the fact that the hour had come for me to go to the Chapel to become godfather to my dear Dorothy's first-born, and I went. And he was christened Absalom Baldwin; and I gave him a silver cup, and his mother a kiss.

When the evening was come, repairing to the Chapel with Master Newell I found there all that I had summoned, and others drawn by curiosity and perhaps the thought that I might need them to advise with me. But I needed them not for that for I knew what I should do.

And mighty solemn and frightened were the summoned. They had, of course, all heard of the happenings of the day. They were in doubt and fear. All but five of those couples claiming to be living in wedlock produced the written evidence of their lawful marriage, the five were unable to do so. Worseley began to speak in continuation of his base plea that he had sinned and of his purpose to have naught



to do from that time forth with Lavinia, whom he again sought to denounce; but I forbade him. She sat, cowed, subdued, bruised and broken; a most sad spectacle for a Christian man to look upon.

The good Master Newell wore a grievous look of hopeless bewilderment doubt and misgiving on his kind face, but I knew what to do and that I would do it, and so knowing my heart was light.

"Oliver Worseley and Lavinia, heretofore known as his wife, will come forward to the altar rails."

They came; he with such an air of hypocritical sanctimony on his evil face that I struggled mightily with myself before I crushed the impulse to strike him down; she, meek and humble in seeming but with a quick, uneasy glancing of her poor aching eyes; for she knew not what was to come and was in fear.

"These persons, reverend sir," I said to the clergyman, whom I had signed to his place within the rails, "have come hither to be joined in the holy bonds of wedlock; and I crave your good offices in the matter."

Blank astonishment sat upon every face; for a moment there was utter silence; then Worseley—

"Nay, your Worship, I do beseech you. On my knees I have promised my God that I will abandon my sinful ways; I do repent me of the evil I have done; I have the assurance that He hath pardoned me, in witness of which I do here consecrate myself from henceforward to a life of chastity, sobriety and all true godliness."

"And it shall be my business to see that you keep your vow, my man," said I. "Proceed, reverend sir."

"Hold!" cried Worseley, again, "I cannot, shall not, may not do this thing—I shall never again deliver myself into the hands of this woman whose sinful wiles have led me astray."

"You will marry Lavinia, and you will marry her now, Master Worseley; and you will not trouble yourself with further discourse concerning the thing."

He shot a glance of fiery malice into my eyes where



he surely read the folly of his essay to resist me; for he turned about and the ceremony proceeded.

And your grandfather gave away the bride.

And he also furnished the ring; the which, after it had been used in the ceremonies which united the other four couples he then returned to Lavinia, as a wedding gift.

I think Master Newell was completely in the dark till I bade him marry Lavinia to Worseley; but that then my whole purpose burst upon him; for his face was filled with a most happy and serene look in which was perfect confidence and no fear.

Then I spake briefly to all present, telling what my perplexity had been and how it had been solved, explaining my purpose to keep these erring ones among us, to the end that they should be brought to repentance for their sins, and be helped by the prayers of God's people in the seeking of pardon; enjoining upon our godly people the duty of entreating all with sweetest charity and helpfulness. In the end I asked the clergyman to address those just married; the which he did with great power and effect; pointing out the honorableness and holiness of the relations they had assumed; the duties and responsibilities that had fallen to them; the great opportunity afforded them to do godly service for the Master; the future that lay so brightly before all those who were so fortunate as to be among the inhabitants of Mountjoy Manor, and the happy and useful lives that all might lead here. But in all he said there was no word of reference to the circumstances which had led up to the five marriages; he spoke as he might have done to those who had come in all innocence and purity, mating because of the honest and honorable love they had for each other, and for this my heart blessed him.

He beckoned to me as he closed, and said: "Of a truth, sir, thy heart is in the hand of the Lord; He turneth it whithersoever He will." And a weakness fell upon me and for a moment I trembled.

At the end of his discourse Master Worseley, clearing his throat with a loud ahem, began to go down upon his



knees with evident purpose to indulge us with one of his powerful prayers; whereupon I gently assisted him to his feet again, saying—

“And now will we seek our closets, there to pray in secret to the Father who seeth and heareth in secret; and He shall reward us openly.”

My people went loyally forward and congratulated the newly wedded ones, with most discreet sobriety, and clear good-will. As I did my share the poor women who had been made honest wives were greatly affected; they all kissed my hand, weeping softly; but Lavinia threw herself at my feet, clasping them, while Worseley looked evilly and angrily on. As I raised her I said to him in a low voice and with a steady glance—

“Remember, sirrah, that I shall ever have an eye on you from henceforth.”



## CHAPTER XLVII

### HE DELIVERED THE FATHERLESS AND BRAKE THE JAWS OF THE WICKED

THE MANOR, 15th February, 1657.

For a time things went very well. The health of the community was good, even though the winter was severe; we had a-plenty to eat and to drink and (what is of even more importance) to do. There were, between the last of October and the 15th of January (last month) ten births among us; and five were male and five were female; so that Dr. Chenowith is having experience to teach him his profession, and Master Newell is growing daily more impatient for the arrival of the *Lady Eleanor* which will bring him a marble font for our little Chapel. When I questioned the fitness of anything so elaborate for such humble surroundings he answered that as Christ first came in His spotless purity and loveliness to be the door of the Church even before He had founded it, so this font (also the door of the Church, since all must enter it through baptism), we shall here provide to God's glory in the wilderness—"and never fear," he cries, "some day, a building fitly joined together, shall be added unto this door, which we shall first set up." Amen, and amen, say I.

When the weather permits work is rapidly pushed forward on the new homes we are building; and when nothing out of doors can be done there are plough-shares, scythes and sickles to sharpen, cradles and other furniture to be made, tools to be put in order, skins to be tanned, and, with the women, a constant whirring of wheels to spin our wool and hemp, wherewith they keep our weavers busy. Our school is prospering bravely, and Master Newell says that never saw he in all his experience a set of scholars who



in all grades and branches of study average up better than, or even so well as these children of our right-living people.

We have much pleasure, mirth and enjoyment of the seemly sort among ourselves. Once a week a dinner is given at the Manor House to a tableful of my people, to which all are invited by turns; and once a week, my dear Nell, my sister Betty and I enjoy the hospitality of some one or other; while smaller dinners and parties are going forward almost every evening among our neighbors where our presence is not expected. The celebration of Christmas was on the model of that of '53, and was a joyful feast for every one; and my dear and Betty are minded that at the coming Easter the Resurrection of Our Blessed Lord shall be so commemorated as shall show a proper precedent for the godly imitation of those who shall follow us for all time to come—and so that may therefore be considered as settled.

There were these conditions (and are now, but were interrupted, as I shall show), till about three weeks ago; the only drawback I could find to my perfect content with all things being the exceeding prominence which Worseley chose to give to what he called his sanctification of the Spirit, whereby he arrogated to himself a great godliness; of a truth he was instant in season and out of season in making public proclamation of the same, claiming that although his sins had been as scarlet they had been washed white as wool in the blood of the Lamb; asserting that he had been so cleansed that God no longer imputed unrighteousness unto him; and striving by ingenious argument to convince us all that having been so purified he had gained such acceptance with God that he was no longer in peril of the commission of sin; and more of the same sort.

Now, while nothing could have been more pleasing to me than to believe that all this was true (as, I conceive, it may be of a man), yet there was such a greasy unction about the fellow that I could not do it, and especially when I considered his former life was I prone to doubt; and these things brought me oft to my knees, to plead that I might be delivered from all malice and uncharitableness, and from



all pride vain-glory and the sinful feeling of self-righteousness which might cause me to misjudge any human being in so important a matter.

But yet did I keep my eye on him as I had promised him.

He was a wily and an able rogue, and so gifted with persuasiveness of speech and cunning of argument that, with a memory crammed and crowded with texts, he was equipped to deceive the very Elect themselves; and that he did draw some after him but added to my perturbation of spirit. In it all however, I kept ever an eager watch on his wife Lavinia; being persuaded that if he were really all, or even a part of what he professed himself to be, there would be evidence of the same in her face and as well in her daily walk and conversation among us. And that she did never raise her head (nor hath she since the day of her marriage to him), and in her close living at home, in the sad and almost despairing aspect of her face, and the hopeless mournfulness of her eyes whenever she did show herself in public, I thought and feared that there was evidence that he was using his cloak of righteousness to cover an unchanged and most vilely corrupt nature, all the more base and sinful because of his hypocrisy—and I hated myself for so thinking, praying that I might be deceiving myself. For I would far rather have endured the punishment a just God should inflict on me for so presumptuous a sin than to have had my suspicions confirmed. But I was right. I am honestly sorry to say it, but my suspicions were amply confirmed.

One day there came to me in sad distress the Mistress Naomi Bryce, widow of Moses Bryce, one of the four married men who were killed in our campaign against the Ricahecrians last year, to lay before me a shame so great she could barely speak it. But I called my dear into the chamber where we were, and bade her speak on, in God's name. She told me that her daughter Mary, a most sweet and shy young maiden of irreproachable behavior and character being about sixteen years of age and well-grown, seeing that her mother was hard put to it to do for her



large family, many of them too small to help her or even themselves for that matter, had sought to learn how she might effectually share rather than add to the burdens of her mother. 'Twas a most dutiful and noble desire, and yet the sequel shall show how Satan doth ever seize upon even the best of our impulses and seek to turn them to the furtherance of his diabolical purposes.

In compliance with my own advice request and example, all my people had shown the most kindly courtesy to the Worseleys, and especially to Lavinia; striving to make her feel that her sin was not remembered against her, and that her footing was that of all the rest of the women here; and in that spirit Mary went with all innocent boldness to her to seek instructions in the art of the seamstress. It appears that at the first Lavinia gave her no encouragement, but the next day (under duress as we after found, from Worseley), she sent for the maiden and said she could come daily to be taught. And so she went.

For a few days Worseley was on his good behavior but of a most civil and polite manner to Mary; then he began to recommend himself to her as a man upon whom God had conferred unusual righteousness; he made himself appear as one who could do no evil, having been sanctified and so rendered incapable of sinning, so that whatsoever he might do, must be of the Lord and therefore righteous in His sight. Mary, an innocent girl, was much impressed by this (which was so shrewdly urged that one even wiser and of a more suspicious nature might well have been deceived), and gave such tokens of her belief in the scoundrel that one day Lavinia could not forbear breaking forth in honest indignation to warn the girl that he was but a liar and a hypocrite seeking to deceive her for some evil purpose. Whereupon what does my master rogue do but fall upon his knees and bawl forth a prayer that God should forgive his wife for her sinfulness in thus suspecting and traducing him, and this with such cunning skill that poor Mary was moved to tears, and in that frame of mind exhorted Lavinia that she should not be so unjust, but



should also ask God to forgive her uncharity and hardness of heart, and that He should remove that blindness which made it impossible that she should see her husband in his true light.

The next day (Mary having promised at Worseley's tearful petition that she would that night pray in secret that Lavinia might be forgiven), when the maiden went back to the Worseley cabin to her work she found Lavinia with her head and face tied up in bandages, because, the poor woman said, of a sore tooth which had swollen her cheek most shamefully—the truth being (as at last we learned) that Worseley had beaten her almost to death to punish her for having interfered to save the poor ignorant girl from his vile clutches. And from that time forward Lavinia, under continued duress and fear of her life, consented to aid and abet him in all that he did or essayed to do till the last moment, and until it was almost too late.

Having thus established himself firmly in the confidence of the child as one who was peculiarly blessed of God and could do nor think evil (since his every impulse came directly from God, even as He inspired the old Prophets), the fiend entered upon the work of corrupting her mind in the furtherance of his infamous designs by teaching her that while the restraints of the marriage state were of all good use and purpose with the great majority of human beings (who being in a state of sin could not be trusted with the enjoyment of pleasures reserved to the free use of the Saints), yet in the case of one sanctified there could be no sin in that which in another was culpable. In support of his position he cited many cases of holy men of old who were led by God Himself, as he said, to the doing of acts which, by our religion and even the imperfect laws of men, are forbidden to all, those free from sin as well as those in its bonds. God's saints, he made bold to say, were not bound as other men were; together with much more most specious and satanically plausible reasoning well calculated to have set a stronger head in a whirl.



But what her intellectuality would not, it may be, have sufficed to shield her from, her innate purity and at last the remaining spark of true womanhood in Lavinia did prevent her falling before; and to-day, thank God, the dear maiden is as pure as the day she was born. For despite the confidence he had gained, despite the fact that he had really made her believe that he was what he said he was, there was that shrinking on her part which could never permit her to become his victim. Nor could he induce her to meet him elsewhere than in his own house and in the presence of his wife.

And during all of this time this infamous wretch was a constant associate of all our people, going in and out among us with such discretion that none could find flaw or fault in him; but ever with that air of unctuous sanctimony that turned my stomach and hardened my heart till my bones ached for his unmasking that I might smite him, as the chosen instrument of God, to visit His wrath, fierce, strong and swift upon him; aye, in spite of all my fears that I might be wrong, and prayers that I might be forgiven for and cleansed from my uncharitableness, I ever rose from my knees with that desire still burning hot within me.

And not only was Worseley going in and out among us following his daily concerns in this manner but he was likewise, during all the time he was thus working on and perfecting his hellish scheme, most assiduous and diligent in his attendance at the Chapel; not only at the regular Sunday services but at the frequent meetings during the week for prayer to which we have all become so habituated that we do prize them most highly; and there he was ever prompt and zealous in fervent petitioning. Surely God would have smitten him then and there but that He had a lesson to teach us! So devout was he and so many outward signs did he show of possessing the inward grace which he claimed to have that the good clergyman, himself, was wont to speak to me of him as a precious brand plucked from the burning and to thank God for this wondrous



showing-forth of His great mercy and loving kindness towards the sinful children of men.

Aye, my much loved grandchildren; you shall find that the Evil One is most subtle and skilful in deceits; and to you he may oft seem a very Angel of Light. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, and Our God shall surely deliver thee from his most cunning wiles.

The day came at last however, to this arch-fiend, as it must come sooner or later to all of his kind; and his career was ended by his betrayal in his confidence in the power of Satan to enable him to succeed in all his purposed villainy; and then he learned that the Power of Evil, great as it is, may not hope to strive and accomplish to the uttermost against Our God.

For one day, failing in every other device and wrought up to a pitch of demoniacal madness, he sought to work his evil will by force; and that in the presence of Lavinia. The shrieks of the girl were smothered by a blanket he had thrown over her head and her physical weakness made her no match for the brute. But he had counted once too often on the patient submission of his poor wife. When she realized what was toward she felled the coward to the floor with a heavy chair and opening the door bade Mary fly for her life.

The child ran to her home which was close by, and in an agony of grief told her mother all, and the mother came at once to me.

May God forgive me if I sinned in that my soul sung for joy and my heart was filled with thanksgiving; and I cried within myself "O, full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, now shalt thou cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord; for now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and verily that hand is my hand, and it shall bring thee to thy appointed end and that right speedily."

Sending at once a message to the constable to seize Worseley and his wife, and to Captain Taber to put his men under arms and allow none to leave the settlement, I



summoned the Court Leet for instant session in the great hall of the Manor House; but bade the women (save Lavinia, Mary and her mother) and all the children to remain at home. And the Court Leet met, called to order by me at 7 of the clock in the evening.

Briefly stating the case and explaining that the prisoner should be tried by those assembled, and should have every honest opportunity to defend himself, I called the witnesses; Worseley having pleaded "not guilty" with a most defiant and godless air, he having dropped all his assumed piety.

To testify was a sore trial to the poor girl, Mary; but she did that which was her duty with such purity and modesty as crowned her with all honor. I feared trouble with Lavinia, but she told the truth, much more fully, yet not more honestly, than poor Mary had done; first speaking (by way of explanation she seemed to feel bound to make) somewhat as follows:—

"Your Worship, when I came hither to Virginia it was with no great hope that there should be here for me any better life than what I had known for some years, but I came with the fear of death before me if I stayed in London, and because this man persuaded me; and it is a marvel that such an one can so bring others to his will; but his master, Satan, hath ever befriended him. For a time after so coming here I was his willing accomplice in sin; for I had no hope in the world and felt that every man's hand was and ever would be against me. But in that mysterious way with which you are all now acquainted God raised me up, and from an abandoned wanton I was made an honest wife. And in the manner of the doing of this thing I was made to see that mankind was not all as vile as I was, and as those with whom for years my life had been spent, were,—and that the power of God was great enough to make some good, even if many were evil.

"And the constant kindness and sweet charity shown me by all from that time forward did work unceasingly upon my nature; and while I did not betray this man, my husband, I did not willingly consent to his wickedness, and



ever nursed a hope that I should soon be delivered from it. But that hope was that the deliverance should come through such a change in his nature as God alone may work—and it still is that the change may come even yet and that he may not be cut off in his sins. This shall ever be my prayer.

“And I do beseech you who are here that you may likewise pray, for ye are righteous and to the prayers of the righteous doth God ever hearken; while I, alas, am the vilest of sinners unworthy to so much as breathe the air He hath given to all His creatures.

“But my resolve hath been taken and is unshakeable that from this time forth I will no more walk in the paths of sin if He will but help me; if He shall not, it will be but just; and yet shall I strive, in my sinful weakness, to do that which is right even though I perish in so doing; and therefore shall I now speak the truth in this matter, imploring you all not to take this man’s punishment into your own hands but to leave him to his God.”

Then she gave her testimony.

When she had done I asked Worseley if he had aught to offer in rebuttal by way of testimony, or to say himself in his own behalf. He said he had no witnesses, that the case was cooked up against him by two women, one a low London trull and the other an idiot who could be made to believe anything; that he stood here upon his rights as an Englishman, and demanded them, having fought for them under the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell; that it was his right to order his private conduct as he wished; that it was his right to have a fair trial before a jury of his peers; that this was not nor could it be a fair trial; that this blustering bullying tyrant who called himself Lord of the Manor had, from the beginning, pursued him with a most fiendish and persistent malignity and would now, he doubted not, hang him, unless there should be enough of the true spirit of English liberty in the breasts of the men present to prevent it; and so forth, and so on, for a good hour. Although several signed me to stop him I chose not



to do so but gave him all the rope he wanted; being minded that he should say all he wished without restraint.

When he concluded I summed up briefly, as follows: "1st—As to your standing upon your rights as an Englishman; that you shall; every Englishman hath a right, and there can be no greater, to all that he doth earn and deserve; and that you shall have, to the uttermost; that as to your right, or any man's to order his private conduct as he wishes, that shall be conceded with the proviso that when his rights reach the line where another's begin he may go no further, and this shall ever be the rule of conduct on Mountjoy Manor; that as to your right to have a trial before a jury of your peers, I trust in God, and verily believe that it is impossible to find even one man here so base that he is your true peer or equal, and I am of no mind to bring hither to try you, or for any other purpose, any more of your kind; that for the compliment you pay me in your hatred for me I thank you; it is the least you can do for me, and the most I can ask of you or any other like you; that in your assumption that I shall hang you, you have displayed a rare prescience; for you are adjudged guilty of the crime alleged against you and the sentence of this Court is that you be taken hence by the Constable and safely confined in the gaol, to be taken thence at the hour of sunset to-morrow, and conveyed to Skunk Hollow, without the limits of the grant pertaining to this Manor, and there be hanged by the neck until you are dead; and may God have mercy on your polluted soul! And that He may we do most earnestly recommend that you also shall pray without ceasing till your last moment comes."

"You have not even asked the Court Leet to declare its voice!" he yelled as he sprang to his feet, foaming at the mouth.

"Nor need I do so. If any member of the Court hath any quarrel with my judgment or sentence he is welcome to present it to me in person."

The parson labored with him all that night, and until



he was hanged; and reported that he died penitent. I hope he did.

When, at the end, the wig was taken from his head, and the patch from his eye, I looked upon the face of Hosea Cramworth, the obscene priest whom I had sent packing while with Cromwell in Scotland.



## CHAPTER XLVIII

### LOVELY IN LIFE, IN DEATH THEY WERE NOT DIVIDED

THE MANOR, 15th February, 1682.

*The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen!*

*Ye mountains, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, as though he had not been anointed of our God!*

*My heart's love was swifter than the eagle, and stronger was he than the lion!*

*Ye daughters of Israel, weep over him who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel!*

*How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places!*

*I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was so wonderful, passing the love of women!*

*How are the mighty fallen!*

Some years ago there came to the Great Falls of the Potomac from the settlements between and about the James and the York Rivers, a band of dissolute persons driven forth into the wilderness because of their loose way of living, by the Royal Governor, Sir William Berkeley; and truly their way of living must have been vile indeed to have so offended such a man.

There were of them fifteen men and ten so-called women. They had been shipped from London for various crimes, to the Colony; and landing at Jamestown became a festering



sore in the body of the community. At all times and in all places were they ever engaged in evil and licentious behavior; so that nowhere could men endure them. Punishment had no effect upon them; imprisonment was for them but a resting-spell in which to recuperate and gather fresh strength to go forth again to prey upon the goods and morals of all. Incorrigible, valuing neither their own nor other's lives a pin's fee, they could not be permitted to remain in the settled parts, nor could they be sent back to England; neither had they committed such high crimes as, in the eye of the law, should justify their killing by its hand.

And so, despairing of any other solution of the problem they gave him to solve, Sir William sent them forth under charge of an armed escort in the depth of winter (it was the month of December), with order to lead them so far away into the wilderness that they might not hope to return, and there leave them to whatever fate might befall them. By mere chance they were left near the Great Falls and upon the north side of the river. They had but little food, barely enough clothing for their utmost necessities, and no shelter. Of fire-arms they had but few. Their condition was truly desperate.

It was perhaps two weeks after their cruel abandonment (of which we knew, as yet, nothing), that a poor, starving creature having the form of a man came staggering weakly into our settlement of Mountjoy. He was so ravenous for food that he ate like a wild beast, and was incoherent in speech for the space of a whole day. Then he told his story and that of those he had left behind starving and suffering.

My brother John at once made up store of provisions and himself led a party to their relief. He hath never failed in all his life to lead the way to the help of the suffering. He supplied their immediate wants and leaving some of our men to construct cabins for them, came home again; and forthwith despatched them further relief, as he did during the winter—and indeed hath done all these years.



He was at first minded to bring them here; but after investigation into their characters and manner of life, concluded it would not be wise to do so. He also felt that it were better he should take them further away from the point where the *Lady Eleanor II.* doth find her berth to lade and unlade twice a year; and so in the Spring he moved them further to the Northwest, some forty miles, locating them in a fertile and well watered valley, about five and twenty miles north by east of Mountjoy; where again he caused cabins to be constructed for their occupancy, furnished them with tools and farm animals, and gave them such aid (and with assurance of such further as they might require) as ought to have enabled them to become self-supporting if they had but been disposed to any sort of honest effort. Nor did he neglect precautions for their soul's health; for he sent, regularly every fortnight, the Reverend Asa Cammack (who hath been for the past fifteen years assistant to the Reverend Hugh Newell in both Church and school), to preach, and minister unto them in godly things.

But this people did always prove troublesome neighbors; having, it would seem no soil in them in the which the respect and desire for decent living might take root and grow. They neglected all opportunities to make use of the bounteous privileges which God, through Nature, offered them; they tilled the soil in a shiftless and hap-hazard way so that it yielded them only that which partially fed them during summer and autumn, and every winter it was John's providence that kept them from starvation, so that it hath come to be a regular part of the routine of our life that supplies should be sent them from our stores, at stated intervals.

They remained an idle, vicious, godless band of wretches hopelessly sunken in a life of sin. Their numbers decreased from time to time, although sometimes recruited by births (of children who, like the young of the rattlesnake, seemed to come into the world already filled with poisonous venom and ready to strike and slay from the hour they first saw



the light), until at the beginning of this present winter there were only seven, all told. And in these seven were comprised the very worst of all those who had been in their colony; the hardened and very wickedest being it seems, reserved to the last—those who had stolen our cattle, robbed our warehouse at the Little Falls, and, it is believed, finally burned it three years ago with all it contained; albeit this never could be proved.

Four weeks ago John sent supplies to these people, a wagon-load, with Joseph Wilson and James Olmsted in charge, from the warehouse at the river. The men were gone three days on this business and the day of their return reported to Dr. Chenowith that one man of the Ishmaelites had died of the small-pox the day before our party had reached them and that three others were prostrate with the same disease. Master Chenowith acted most promptly in the case of Wilson and Olmsted, putting them away from all on the Manor in quarters near the warehouse, and sending to nurse them, Lavinia, the widow of Worseley; she having had the infection in her youth and recovered, and so being no more in danger from it. In spite of this care Olmsted died; Wilson hath recovered but is a great wreck.

At once John understood that the little colony of outcasts was infected with the dread disease his soul was filled with compassion for them and he was determined they should have relief. To this Dr. Chenowith dissented; saying it would be sure death for any to go to them (for, save Lavinia, we had none who had ever had the disease), unless it might be himself; that he would go if desired, but pointing out that if he too, should fall in the work the Manor would be without a physician. And to his going John would not hear, his being a life too valuable to be imperiled; declaring that he himself alone should go, arguing that as he had once been exposed to the infection (when he nursed poor Robert Cromwell), without being affected by it he might well presume upon his immunity. To this the doctor shook his head with a tightening of his lips,



but said nothing; for who that knew him could ever hope to dissuade my brother from that which he held to be a duty?

"I shall ask no one to do what I fear to do myself," said he; "and I shall e'en go and see these poor wretches through their troubles, and come back to be so purified by thy spells and magic, Absalom (and it may be needing the Parson's aid, too), as to be once again fitted for the company of decent people."

To the Lady Eleanor also he spoke lightly and cheerfully of his going and by his manner sought to quiet her misgivings, refusing to listen to her suggestions of the danger he should incur. But to me he spoke more gravely and seriously, instructing me where might be found the will he made when he led his men forth to the help of our Eastern neighbors in the uprising of the Algonquin and Susquehannock Indians six years ago, saying that in it he had given full directions for the carrying out of his plans as to the management of the business of the Manor; this he begged me to enjoin upon young John (who, if God wills, shall return from England on the *Lady Eleanor II.* when she arrives this summer, bringing his bride with him), to endeavor to execute in strict compliance with his wishes as therein expressed even where the judgment of his son might differ from his own. And he gave me especial charge to look after the affairs of all our poor and helpless; and above all, if anything should happen him, to comfort and soothe his dear Nell whom he had never ceased to love and worship next to his God.

"She and you will guide my children, all, in the right way; I have no fear of that, Betty dear," he said, kissing me. "But I hope it shall not come to that just yet," and before we knew it he was off on his errand, blithe and serene as the angel of God—which he was.

He had been gone a week and no tidings had come from him when the Lady Eleanor, troubled by fears for his welfare beyond all bearing, gave orders that her horse should be saddled and gathering a few necessities went



after him. It was in vain that we all begged and pleaded with her that she should not take the dreadful risk—a dozen offered to go in her stead—but she was resolute, (as my dear Nell ever was), and naught could move her.

“My place is by my husband’s side in his hour of trial and need. He may require my help; but—God knows how I shall find him. Whatever case he may be in with him should be his wife. He is on God’s errand and I am fitted for it, too; but only because I am his wife—and I shall share it. It was cowardly of me to let him go alone.”

And kissing us good-by, beginning with the children (for whom she would have given her heart’s blood), and doing it, too, with her own great courage, so that her eyes were dry while all others wept, she fared forth after the man who, of all men, was ever worthy the highest and best love that woman might give; aye, even of hers; and more cannot be said than that.

Another week passing with no news I went myself. When I came to the warehouse Wilson told me that Lavinia had gone on with the Lady Eleanor. When I got near the cabins where the outcasts had lived and died I found Lavinia waiting for me, on a hill a short distance from them.

“I knew you would come, and was here waiting for you,” she said simply. “It is all over.”

I held myself with all my control; but so violent was my trembling that I feared I should show weakness and fall from my horse.

“Come hither woman, that I may grip your shoulder and alight,” I said; “and tell me what you mean by your fool’s gabbling of all being over.”

“There is no living soul here save yours and mine, Mistress,” she answered, calmly, albeit I felt her wince as she felt my grip.

I walked to a stone near by and sat down upon it. There was snow upon the ground and the scene was wild and desolate. And yet the air was sweet and clear and bracing,



and a few winter birds flew and hopped and chirped about us.

I looked out over the valley stretching at our feet and remember that I noted the curious twisting of a wild grape-vine around a tree near by; and further off, a considerable hill, with truncated peak, and I wondered by what name it should come, in time, to be known. And more, of such idle thoughts I had.

Slowly I brought my eyes back and at my feet they fell upon a little mound of earth, covered with the light snow; flicking it off with idle strokes of my whip I saw that it was an ant-hill; and fell to speculating as to how many of the little creatures lived within it, and whether they ever froze to death.

My horse snuffed snow up into his red nostrils and I thought it was perhaps soothing and cooling to him; the noise he made frightened a rabbit which went scurrying and bobbing off to her home where I hoped she would find her babes warm and safe.

Over the brow of the little hill upon which we were I saw smoke rising as from a chimney; and remembered that I had noted it as I came on, only now it seemed a heavier column.

And all this time my mind was as blank as a baby's. It had no realizing sense of where I was or what errand I had come on or of anything; all had slipped away from me; and although Lavinia's words were still in my ears they had no signification for me. I was nothing better than an unfeeling, unreasoning animal and I laid my head on the high rock which made a back to my seat and closed my eyes, inhaling the sweet, pure air, but with no other sensation, nor desire save to taste its fresh, cool dampness.

How long this lasted I know not; but I was suddenly aroused by a hoarse, croaking shriek from Lavinia and, slowly following with my eyes her outstretched arm and pointing finger I saw the smoke I had been aware of now grown into a great dense volume, through which shot



fiercely a red sheet of flame; and the roaring of the fire filled my ears.

"What is it, Lavinia?"

"The house—the house!"

"What house?"

"The house where they lie side by side, hand clasped in hand; as in life they were so now in death."

Then, and even then with scarce a realization I sprang to my feet and rushed forward.

The cabin was a-fire; through the open door I saw that it was filled with a riot of pure, bright flame; flames shot between the logs and up through the roof.

A swift current of air came from the North and swept it into a great furnace heat, and the roaring of its fierceness thrilled me through. The great logs, as they were undermined, fell inwardly.

In an hour there was nothing left but a bed of glowing coals beside which we sat. And still I wept not, but was glad that God had sent the fire to restore to it its own perfect purity that which had been made foul and loathsome by the dread disease—to restore to that which was left of John and Nell that purity which had ever filled their hearts and minds and shone from their eyes and made itself manifest in their every act and deed.

Leaving Lavinia at the warehouse till she should be purified and made fit to come to the Manor, I went home with my news. The children, the three boys and two girls at home (Eleanor being in France with her husband, but to return in a year), met me in company with the doctor and Dorothy, and her mother, Ruth, who though only a few years my senior is much more broken than I, and their faces were the repetition of the faces of John and Eleanor Baldwin.

And they heard my news with the calm, high courage of their race; and, retiring to their chambers, fought out the battle, each alone with the God that ordereth all.

Dr. Chenowith went with coffins and fetched fragments of the bones; and they lie together on the hill sloping to the



south and west where the sunbeams do linger longest and the flowers bloom earliest and fairest.

When John reached the outcasts there were five living and one dead; the dead he buried and three days later two more passed away; the next day two; these he also buried; the record was found by Lavinia and the Lady Eleanor, by the sick man's side as he lay tossing in delirium near the corpse of the remaining outcast. This corrupt mass Lavinia wrapped in a blanket and carried to an open grave (John had prepared it, and another by its side so large that we knew for whom he meant it), and returned to help and care for John.

He was strong and clung to life.

In two days Nell, too, was ill; in three delirious; in four dead; and still he held on to life, a few hours longer.

Then suddenly he came to his senses.

He saw Nell's body lying near him. He looked startled, and then as if he understood; and motioned Lavinia to bring him nearer. Then he clasped her poor dead hand, speaking softly and lovingly—

“O my dear, have you come to me? Have you come?”

After a moment he raised his eyes and said clearly and joyfully, “Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly,” and so died.

ELIZABETH BALDWIN.

THE END







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